
IMPRIMATUR,

Ex Aed. Lamb.

1711. 1673.

Tho. Tomkyns,

IMPRIMATUR,

Ex Ed. Lamb.

1771. 1673.

Tho. Tomkyns,

2

A

FREE

AND

IMPARTIAL INQUIRY

Into the Causes of that very great
Esteem and Honour that the Non-
conforming Preachers are generally
in with their Followers.

IN A

LETTER

To his Honoured Friend H. M.

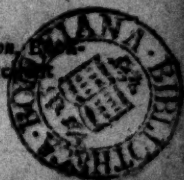
By a Lover of the Church of *England*,
and Unfeigned Piety.

Θαυμάζοις ὡς ποῦται. Ίνδ. 16.

To which is added a Discourse on
1 Tim. 4. 7. to some of the Clergy
at a publick Meeting.

LONDON,

Printed by J. M. for Richard Royston, Book-
seller to the Kings Most Excellent
Majesty, 1673.



F R E E

into the hands of the very same
Enslaved Men and Women that the
Enslaved Men and Women are
in the hands of the same

L E T T E R

to the Enslaved Men and Women
by a person of the Enslaved Men and Women
and Enslaved Men and Women

Enslaved Men and Women
To which is added a List of the
Enslaved Men and Women of the City
at a public meeting

Printed by A. M. for Richard R. R. R.
Teller to the Kings Men and Women
Monthly, 1844



Dear Sir,

HOW very truly that delightful walk, which with so much art and charge, you have forced out of that neglected piece of ground adjoining to your Gardens may be compared to the ancient *Peripatium*, those very many that you are pleased to oblige there with the better Hospitallity of *ingenious* discourses, can abundantly witness. And truly, Sir, as I have been happy in being one of the frequentest Guests there; so I could not but think my self unjust, should I not make this publick acknowledgment of it,

A 3

though

though I be sufficiently assured, that since you honour me with a real Friendship, you expect no such empty and troublesom recognitions. Now Sir, the method that you have been pleased to fix your friends, that attend you in such converses, you know to be this, to agree before-hand upon what shall be the subject of the next Essay, and the reason you gave for it, I remember was this, that thereby we might with a little more care furnish our minds, and be more advantaged by communicating (not any sudden rash or raw) but the best and most maturely digested sentiments of our Souls, each to other. For as the *spartan* Logicians (say you) were (not without good reason) never permitted to make any quick
and

and sudden responses to any question proposed to them. So though perhaps some things pertinent may fall from men on the sudden, yet doubtless those that consider well before-hand have much the advantage.. Leisure easily mends what haste did well, and always corrects what precipitancy did amiss.

My present infelicity, Sir, is to be prevented by an envious distemper of giving you my promised attendance. Yet that I might go as far as my utmost possibilities would permit, in paying my due respects to you, I have sent this to supply my place, and if you will please to permit K. to be my Official, he shall read what I should have spoken.

Sir, I will be bold to tell the World that there is no Gentle-

man (placed in the like circumstances) that can be more cordially solicitous for the interest of true Religion, and the flourishing Estate of the Church of *England*, than your self. No man hath more deeply and heartily bewailed her late woful persecution, nor can any have more solaced himself in the hopes of her rising to her ancient splendor, since the late blessed and miraculous revolution.. But providence lets us be witnesses, that even rational hopes sometimes (as to the expected Event) are vain, and that Clouds many times obscure the new-risen Sun. That most fecundant heat which produceth that most deliciously enamel'd Carpet, that we see spread upon the Earth, produceth also Frogs and Serpents,
that

that disturb or make dangerous that repose that men designed or promised themselves upon it. And that most wise, and always just providence of Heaven, oftentimes allays the greatest felicities here below, with some ungrateful and vexatious appanages. And thus that great delight that so much longed for comfort, that we may now take in worshipping our *God*, according to the Primitive Rules, in the Communion of the Church of *England*, is now much impaired and imbitter'd by the contemplation of so many violent Oppositions yet against her, maintained by a multitude of men, whom neither the greatest kindness upon Earth can oblige, nor indeed miracles from Heaven prevail upon to lay aside their Un-

Christian and causeless animosities.

The searching into the causes of this sad reflection hath been the task that you have now for a considerable time imposed upon your self, and your Philosophical Friends. And I should be injurious to the merits of so good a Person, should I forget one account that you have religiously given of this Phænomenon, and that hath been fetched from Gods tenderest respects unto this Church; which though appearing perhaps a seeming Paradox to some slight Considerors, yet you have most intelligibly and plainly explicated. For a full prosperity doubtless is the most perillous temptation, and a state most dangerous to the design of Religion, and the great interests of
of

of Souls. And had we not a full account of this in the difference of Christianity while under its Primitive troubles and persecutions, from what it was when (by the providence of Heaven) it emergeth from under these, and flourished in the triumphal Banners of Kings and Emperours; yet you have told us, if we wanted these, we were able to give too great assurance of this to our selves, within the little compass of our own time, having seen those, who, whilst they were under the late persecution, were exact and regular in all Christian duties, even to the shaming as well as frustrating the malice of those who sought industriously for something whereof to accuse them, yet since the changing of their conditions, have strangely and
sadly

sadly miscarried, swerved from their former rules, and grown to harbour and commit prodigious immorallities.

Now the wise and great goodness of God knowing this, may well exercise us still with these afflictions (and that without any diminution of its own tenderness) that thereby, that filth and rust may be effectually prevented, which should we lye long in an idle prosperity, we should certainly contract. And the inference from it (I remember) was religious and pious, that we should not too much repine and murmur at these disappointments of our hopes; but be so far from entertaining any ill thoughts of God, as to cast the whole blame upon our own wretched infirmities, and bless his goodness
that

that hath so mercifully provided against them.

In the pursuit of this subject, and progress our discourses upon the causes of it, we could not chuse but glance often at the opposite parties, which are indeed the great occasioners of our present disturbances, nor shall they ever be able to free themselves from the guilt of them, what excuses and palliations soever they may hope to frame. Now amongst these our thoughts first fixed themselves upon the *Antisignani*, the Leaders of this great dissenting multitude; and after several things remarkable in them (which I need not now repeat) it came into our purposes to search for the causes of that very great esteem they are in, and that great Veneration they have from

from their deluded Profelytes, to whom as very many of those prophetick marks by which the Hereticks of old are signalized by St. *Jude*, are as pertinently applicable, as if those very persons had already antedated the great resurrection ; so this particularly that now we mention, the θαυμαζόντες πρόσωπα, having the persons of their Leaders in a wonderful admiration.

But, Sir, before I enter immediately upon this task I have thought it might not be wholly impertinent, to vindicate this enquiry from those Censures, which it will be most sure to meet with from others, when it is once discovered. And two there are that perhaps it may be assaulted withal. Either first, that such an enquiry is useless, and the expence of precious

cious time (though I'll assure you this hath not taken up much) will lye heavy on him that pursues it. Or else secondly, that it is allready obvious and plain, and he will but hold a Candle to the Sun that endeavours to account for it.

These are the principal (I am apt to fancy) of any that we need fear; as for any other little petty objections or clamours that (its like) these concerned persons would raise against it, we will wholly disclaim and relinquish our Philosophy if we be much concerned at them.

Now for the assailing the first of these, I will take liberty to assert, that certainly he is either a deeply interested person, or a very superficial Speculator, that can have the confidence to owne it. For

For first a man without pretending any great spirit of prophecy may easily foretel, that while they possess this great esteem, they will most easily influence their people how they please. Sir, it is a great truth, *That the people generally judge by their affections rather than their judgments*, and those whom they admire and reverence, they commonly pay an implicit Faith to all their placits; they will seldom be at the pains or leisure of examining things in their naked garbs, but usually go some nearer and easier way, and pass sentence upon them as they comply with, or dissent from their passions, and humours, and inclinations, or some external interests. And nothing is more easie to observe than this, *viz.* what a mighty influence

influence the reputation of a speaker hath, in raising a ready admittance for what he delivers, into the minds of men; whilst he that labours under prejudices, and encounters with a prepossessing disrespect, shall be little or not at all regarded in what he speaks, though he were as Eloquent as *Tully*. The same things delivered by different persons are very differently resented; Nay, many times a jejune and flat discourse from one, men love, shall be mightily cryed up, before the most excellent compositions of one whom they value not.

And indeed, Sir, it requires no mean stock of Philosophy, for a man to free himself from such prepossessions, and to be able to receive a truth equally from all men. Even the *Spartan*

tan Lords, as wise and as grave as they were, yet if an useful truth were delivered by any of an ill repute, would have it repeated by one of a better esteem; as if truth were not equally so from any men, but owed it's acceptableness to the reputation and credit of him that spake it.

And therefore secondly, one of the surest ways and methods to reclaim their followers, will be by taking of them off from this high esteem of their Leaders, and while that remains fixed, there will be little hopes of success by any other endeavour: In vain shall you endeavour to perswade men to disbelieve or abandon those, whom they have so dear an esteem and respect for; it will be too difficult a task to bring them

them to believe, that those they so highly reverence, will ever be so basely unworthy, as to teach them untruths, or lead them into perdition. No, No, their love expects and hopes for other returns, and better usage from them.

And this (I am apt to believe) will be sufficient to secure this undertaking from this imputation, at least in all sober and unprejudiced persons esteem. I doubt not but these men will cry out, we might have been better employed, and have exercised our deep reasonings (for in such terms I expect their *Sarcasms*) in more profitable and useful Theories. But so have I heard malefactors condemn and rail at the activeness of their pursuers, and assert they might have been more profitably

profitably employed than in their discovery and apprehension; while others have applauded and commended it as hugely conducive to the weal-publick. And certainly those that consider this to be one great cause and Origine of our present distempers, will think the endeavouring to obstruct it a very charitable design, and hugely contributive to the Peace of the Church. And I can sincerely witness that a sense of this was the only reason of this enquiry.

Nor Secondly, Is it any so very obvious and palpable a thing, as some would perhaps be apt to perswade us, but may very well require the pains of a close Enquiror, rightly to state the reasons of it. And truly among the Ordinary Occurrences

currences of things that we commonly converse withal, very few seem more odd and strange. For let us a little while, if you please, stay to examine the reasons, that in such cases are commonly obvious, and which the Patrons of this second objection, doubtless would readily fix upon, and assign as the reasons of what we enquire now about.

I will examine some of the principal ones, and endeavour to let you see, how wide they are in assigning any of them.

1. The first shall be the great learning of these dissenting persons, these great men. This you know, Sir, is naturally accounted a very great adornment to any person, and consequently renders him *visus*, *some great one*, in the esteem
and

and thoughts of others. If we should narrowly search into the artifices and methods by which men have attain'd to honour and renown in the World, we should quickly be able to assert, that Valour and Learning have been the chief: these have been the two great Engines by which men of brisker mettle have lifted up themselves above the rest of their brethren, and attained to shine in higher Orbs than they.

I am not concerned either to discourse of the first of these (though perhaps some would say that they approved themselves good at the Sword) or to arbitrate on which side the degree of merit seems to remain; whether the *Cedant arma togæ*, may be a Text authentic. Or whether the Sword be
not

not of solid and lasting metal, while the Pen is but the excrecence of a rude Soul. It will be more pertinent to remember you, how successful a reputation for the latter, hath been to the Heathen Priests of old in conciliating a reverence for them, from their poor blind ignorant Profelytes, and how very sensible those men were that this alone was the secure way to confirm them in this gainful veneration. Therefore were the Heathen *abdyta* so industriously concealed from vulgar notice, and not a man admitted into their mysteries till after several years probation and study: As if no mean stock of Learning were needful for a Priest. And those few that we read of admitted into these *arcana* in any other method, were

were yet all of them persons whom common fame reported for great Scholars. And truly if I should remark to you how well the Gentlemen in Black beyond the Seas (I mean the Priests of the Romish party) understand this and how the great and only ground of their esteem and veneration among the admiring multitude, is their industrious endeavour by all means to preserve them sensible of their own great Ignorance, and their Leaders great Knowledge : I should add another consideration to let you see how mightily powerful, a repute for learning is to obtain a veneration among the multitude. If this therefore were so eminent in these leading persons, if they alone were the Masters in *Israel*; then I confess

sefs the wonder were less, and the evidence of this might supersede all further enquiry, and demonstrate it to be but impertinently busie. But, Sir, I am willing to have so much charity for these men, as to believe they are not so much Pharisees (in this respect also) as to stile all men but themselves, the *populus terræ, qui nescit legem*. And truly they would go near to exceed the Pharisaick haughtiness, if they quite deny their brethren of the Church of *England* any share with them in this Jewel, nay would be much prouder than I dare judge them to be, if they grant not these the right hand of fellowship.

I am far from aspersing them all as Fools and Idiots, I know some not unworthy to be ranked with the learned; but I think

B

I

I know some others, that have very little, but either a different garb, or a greater stock of boldness and confidence (some would give it a worse name) to difference them from the silliest Woman among the croud of all their Profelytes. And I am prone to think, that I could make some men blush (but that they have abandon'd modesty) if I should tell you, that despair of ever attaining any considerable preferment in the Church, arising from the consciousness of their own mean parts, hath been the great impellent with some men to set up in Conventicles, and offer themselves Leaders of the Factions. But I content my self to observe, that learning cannot be the cause of this veneration, for others both truly are, and
are

are acknowledged generally to be as learned as (or more than) they are. And indeed it might most justly afflict us with great sorrow, if there were either no Saints but amongst the Philistines, or no Seers but those that dwelt at *Ekron*.

2. Another amongst the common ordinary attractives of respect and love, is a charming benignity of conversation. Nothing is more evident than this same; the Courtier commonly outgoes the Scholar here, and you shall see men that have but studied, and are exact in the little modes and arts of pleasant and obliging converse with men, charm their affections, and endear their Respects; whilst others, though never so well accomplished and meriting otherwise, shall yet for want of

this, be cast off, and passed by as rude or deserving at least but a common esteem.

Now, Sir, I imagine, you guess very little pains will be required to shew that these men are none of them Masters of the Ceremonies, nor the only endeavourers of men by a pleasing converse; that they are Masters exactly skill'd in all the cunning Arts of close insinuation, will be easily granted them by any; but those of the Jesuitical Faction, who may very reasonably pretend to be their equals, if not Masters in this, as well as in some other procedures. But as for their outward converse, generally no men are more supercilious and Stoical than they, nor more regardless of civilly giving respect to others. And indeed it
were

were something strange if they should, for mens Opinions and Principles in Religion do mightily influence their manners in conversation, and it will be rarely seenthat a man who is engaged upon a rigid censuring and condemning of others, is over-affable, and courteous, and obliging to his own: But these things ferment and sour his common carriage and deportment, and for the most part render it austere, proud, and harsh. I could easily give light to this observation from the Platonists and Stoicks in the Heathen World, or (to come something closer) in the different tempers of the Remonstrants, and the Disciples of the Idolized man of *Geneva*. What *Calvin's* temper was, to outward common civility, poor

Castellio can tell you from sad Experience; and truly I wish I could not also tell you, that he hath a great many Disciples, the chief of these persons that we are discoursing of. Now truly it will be no great wonder to see those men not very affable and endearing in their common carriage, who have infected their heads, by entertaining so harsh a notion of God Almighty, as to imagine him to be the Author of the horrible *decretum*. They may very well be austere and unpleasant in their carriage to men, who think they herein but imitate the God they adore.

3. Another thing that might gain them a repute, would be the successful managing and maintaining of the beloved cause; if they were victorious here,

here, then 'twere no wonder if they obtained Ovation, or any more splendid triumph among their people: If they had Captivated the Ark of *Israel*, or brought it's God as a spoil to offer unto their *Dagon*, then we could not wonder to see the streets of *Gath* doing them honour, nor to hear the Daughters of *Askalon* singing their *ᾠδὴν νίκης*.

For this (all men know) is indeed a very great endearing of a person to his party; he that brings men victory shall be mightily honoured by them, let him be what he will in other respects. Consonantly to which, we shall find that all victorious Captains in the World have been entertained at their returns with joy and honour, and that not only among the barba-

rous Nations, but the refined Grecians, and grave Romans; nay if *David* be victorious against the *Philistines*, the Virgins of *Israel* will sing his triumph.

But, Sir, I dare trust you or any impartial person whatsoever to umpire the contest, and tell who hath the better of the Battel. Any intelligent and unbiass'd judge will easily and readily give sentence against them. Who seeth not how often, and how shamefully they have been non-plust and baffled? who cannot tell you the miserable sad shifts they have been put upon, to give but any tollerable kind of colour to their cause, that every Idiot may not perceive it ruin'd and undone? Let me see the man that ever yet found *Hooker* to any purpose answered. And how vain and fruitless have the
late

late attempts of *Dr. Owen* been against (that wonder of his Age) *Dr. Parker*. Who seeth not the main cause wholly neglected as invincible, while all the assaults are only made against the mistaken and misrepresented title of the Book, or some other little things that are but accidental and beside the main matter? And yet this (we have heard) hath been cryed up as a full answer by some of the party. But certainly 'tis by the same figure, that he that thinks he hath surprised a few Scouts, may be said to have Conquered the whole Army; or in the same sense as the late King was reported overcome, and routed, when he disarm'd the Forces of *Essex* in the West. Certainly if this be all the Champions that they

B 5

have,

have, or all the force of that Champion (and I'll do him the right to think they have not a better) the Dr. needs not much fear his being overcome, unless perhaps they have some other way of contending, which they hope may be more likely to prevail, as now we see the Scene is changed, he that could not be disputed and argued out of his assertion, must now be laughed and jested out of it; what the grave Doctor could not do, the Jester is set on to Essay, the Jack-Pudding is set up in the Room of his Master, and the Monkey 'tis hoped may once again prove the abler Physician. From sober words it's come to downright raillery, and him whom they could not fairly conquer, yet at least they'll curse and scould at. But if this
be

be a victory let the Cock clap his Wings and crow as loud as he pleaseth. Who that's wise seeth not in this the desperateness of a sinking cause, and an acknowledged inability of ever fairly maintaining it? this is the plain tell-tale of an impotent and enraged passion. If they have no spears now, but bitter words, they'l not much (I hope) wound their Enemy; if these be all the Arrows they have, let them shoot and spare not, they'l do the adversary little injury, but like the Parthian Darts shot in anger against the sun, fall with the greater force & virulency upon their own heads.

And now, Sir, I am freed from these preliminary objections, and at leisure to come to a more close pursuit of our theme. I find nothing more
in

in the way to hinder me from proceeding to a direct search into the causes of this affair. I shall assign four or five things, which (when a little fully considered) may be supposed to have an influence on this matter.

1. The first great cause that I shall venture to assign hereof shall be this. *A preaching up of an empty, formal, Notional kind of Religion, and causing and encouraging men to build their hopes of Heaven upon very easie and pleasing conditions.* If I can demonstrate these Leaders to be guilty of this, I shall need be at very little pains to shew you, that even naturally they will be admired and honoured by their followers.

For first, all men greatly desire Heaven and its happiness,
especially

especially all men that have any tincture of Religion. For Religion being founded upon these two prime *Postulata's*, *the Being of a God* and *the Immortality of the Soul*, the very design of it is to instruct us how we may acceptably serve the one, and secure (not only the present but chiefly) the future felicity of the other. So that mens taking up a profession of any Religion, is an evident Declaration of their desires of a future happiness, which all men call the felicity of Heaven, though they differ very much in the description, and character, and account that they give of it, and of the nature of its enjoyments. And for those that have taken upon themselves the profession of that only excellent Religion, which from its great founder

Founder and Author is called Christian, and are but in any tollerable measure instructed in the Principles of the same, for these to covet Heaven, and the future glory thereof will not appear very strange to any that considers the endearing account and description that therein is given us of it. Indeed the nature of it is so very excellent, so adapted to the satisfaction of a rational Soul; the degrees and measures of it are so very large, so fully commensurate to all the vastest capacities, the most enlarged and craving desires of that Soul, that he must needs forgo himself, cast off all natural affection to his own being, turn savage and barbarous to his own nature, and be guilty of the grossest Misanthropy imaginable, that

that doth not ambition, and covet, that καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰσίων Βάρεθ' ὁξυς (as the Apostle most Rhetorically terms it) that weight of glory, that transcendant felicity, that no *Hyperbole* can possibly reach the measure of. Indeed we may with all safety assert, that the only bare naming of such a felicity, is sufficient to excite the desires and longings of the Soul after it. When the will hath any excellent thing made known unto it, there will need very little more complementing or perswading it into a desire of it, than you would need to use to a pressing hunger, or an hydropick thirst, when those things were before them that they so gasped after. In short, that man must needs be brutish, more sottishly sensual than that
great

great instance of sensuality *Eſau*, who doth not desire this great blessing of his Heavenly Father ; and he comes much short of the self-love even of the Aramitish Sorcerer that desires not to dye the death of the righteous, and that his latter end may be like unto his.-- But sure there needs no great questioning this truth.

And secondly, it is as certain and evident, that as all men desire Heaven, so most men desire it upon the easiest terms, and least offensive conditions that may be : As it is with the Merchants of Earth, so 'tis naturally with those that pretend to traffick for Heaven, they would all gladly have very good pennyworths, buy as cheap as is possible, be at as little pains and labour for Heaven.

ven as may be. And truly the humour of most men is such, that if God will not *give them* Heaven, if he will not freely bestow it upon them for nothing, he may keep it himself, for their parts, they'l never buy so dear a purchase. And as for the rest that seem something better than these, that perhaps may be induced to grant a necessity of doing something on our parts, yet the less that is, the better they are pleased; if they must bear any Yoak, by all means it must be light and easie; if it chance to grate or press ruggedly, if it excoriate and cause pain, if it cross any lust, if it retrench any sensuality, if it fairly consist not with the projected interest, if it restrain any wanton exorbitancy; alas! it's not at all fit for these
mens

mens shoulders, it comports not with their Complexions, and is much too harsh for these mens tender constitutions. If it call for the amputation of a beloved Member, if it require the discarding of an Espoused *Herodias*, it appears savage and cruel in these mens esteem, and they have a Text against it, which shall be suborned to patronize their refusal to obey it. Master spare thy self, these things shall not happen unto thee. And for the man that deals honestly with them, and roundly tells them, that without holiness they but in vain expect to see God, that he only is our great Masters true Disciple, that doth whatsoever he commands him: alas! this man shall be looked upon under the same notion that our blessed Saviour was
by

by the Demoniacs in the Gospel, one that comes *πρὸ καιρῶ* *Bat-vious*, unseasonably to trouble, and disturb their thoughts, and shall be as ungrateful to them as a Tormentor.

But he that can reconcile *Paris* and *Paradise*, and render their sensual lives and great hopes consistent; he that can sing one of the Songs of *Sion* to a wicked Babylonian, that can preach up a possibility of leaping out of a *Dalilah's* lap into the Bosom of *Abraham*; Oh no man hits their humour like this man. *Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile et dulci.* Saith the ancient Adage and be confident 'tis so in this instance. He that will undertake to find out a way how the pleasant and good things here, may be secure of the better that shall be here. after.

after. How the merriments of the flesh shall hereafter continue, and commence raptural exultations and joys of the Spirit. He that can take the bunch off the unjust rich Camels back, and smooth it so, as easily to pass through the Eye of the Heavenly Needle. He that can cut the Gordian knot of duty, and solve the *Ænigm* how a man may be glorious hereafter, without being vertuous here; this man shall be the honoured *Oedipus*, this shall be the *Apollo* whose Altars shall never be without incense; this man shall be the *Alexander* whose Troops of adoring followers shall always be full.

We may without any great fear of censure, take upon us to tell those that deny these things, that they are unacquainted

ted with the humours of men, have lived like so many Recluses in Caves or Rocks, where they have come into no familiarity with things like themselves, yea that they are perfect strangers perhaps to their own tempers.

And perhaps it may not be impertinent to the present subject, to remark to you, how plainly this humour still betrayed and discover'd it self in Gods chosen people of old; according to those Memoirs that the Holy Ghost hath given us of them in those sacred inspirations of the Old Testament. You may (with a very little considering of them) discover, that the great business of the holy Prophets, was still to beat down this fancy, and convince them of a necessity of
moral

moral righteousness; in order to true happiness; to assure them that a few easie ritual observances was not all they were to regard; and that the Ceremonial sanctity was nothing worth in Gods esteem, without the moral purity. And a very little conversing with those holy Histories will let you see, what entertainment these good men commonly found for this truth and plainness. They were hated as Enemies, and pursued as disturbers of their peace, a Prison or worse was sure to be the fate of him, that cryed not still go up and prosper. Alas these things hit not their humours, these were not stories complying with their tempers, and therefore the Preachers of them were sure to find no very good entertainment amongst them.

This

This the Royal Prophet *Isaiah* (we shall find) takes the liberty freely to tell them, *Cap. 30. 10.*

11. Which say to the Seers see not, and to the Prophets, Propheſie not unto us right things; ſpeak unto us ſmooth things, Propheſie deceits, go ye out of the way, turn aſide out of the path: cauſe the holy one of Iſrael to ceaſe from before us. Which words (without the aſſiſtance of any Comment) diſcover to us how little theſe people loved duty, how much they deſired to be indulged and ſoothed up in their immoralities; to have Peace, Peace cryed to them, notwithſtanding all their viciousneſs; and how the only way to be reſpected by them was to comply with their humours and beloved carnallities. And if you'l pleaſe to conſult the Prophet

phet *Micah*, Chap. 2. v. 11.

You'll find him charging them plainly with the same thing also.

If a man walking in the spirit and falshood, do lye, saying I will propheſſie unto thee of Wine and ſtrong drink. He ſhall even be the Prophet of this people. No mat-

ter at all how true or falſe the Prophets words were, if they were but oily and ſmooth, if they did but favour or countenance the beloved ſenſuality; there was no man like him: this ſhould be their beloved Prophet. And conſonantly to this you will find, that the falſe Prophets eaſily perceived this humour, by all means complied with it, and hereby obtained an eſteem and veneration above any of the Prophets of the Lord. One *Zedekiah* with theſe turns ſhould puſh a
thouſand

thousand *Micajah's* out of all esteem with *Ahab* and his people. And that this was the gainful practice of these deceivers, we are assured; therefore are they represented to us, as men that cryed, *Peace, Peace*, when their was *no Peace*. Thus they soothed and flattered the people, and the people largely rewarded them again, and there was no Trade in *Israel* sure to bring in more profit, than the sowing Pillows to mens Elbows, and preaching up Doctrines that brought them ease, and yet promised them happiness.

And if we a little further continue our course with these holy Writings, and come to the New Testament, we shall soon discover, that this also was the method by which the Pharisees, those great Doctors in *Israel*,
C obtain-

obtained such a veneration amongst the multitude: For though it must not be denied them, that they were extreamly strict and even critically austere in their carriage, yet this may safely be added, that all this strictness which they preached up, or practised, was only in very little, and very easie instances, such as were far enough short of any painful austerities, and might well enough consist with, and be performed by the most carnal and sensual Complexions. For what great violence was offer'd to the adored *Mammon* by tything a sprig of Mint, or a Pint of Cummin-seed? little loss could result from hence to the estate; and who would not readily be just in these minute things that he might neglect it in greater? What

What great austerity in fasting twice a week, so that a Feast might be allowed to their lusts all the days beside? What great difficulty in a long Prayer, while that would presently be recompensed with the Widows House? What great hardship in washing before meat, while the Soul was freely left to it's uncleanness? What great unpleasantness in always washing when they had been in the Market, all the while they brought thence such good pennyworths? What course could be less contrary or afflicting to a scornful Pride, than to take care never to eat with Publicans and Sinners? And certainly the wearing broad Philacteries, was no such mighty act of mortification, but could well enough consist with casting Gods Laws be-

hind their backs. Now no men were ever surer of esteem and honour from the multitude than these were ; no men ever hit upon a more certain way to be admired than they. For as strictness doth well, so if it be but in easie small things, it pleaseth too. This exactly suits with a man's humour; for while the one (*i. e.* strictness) may a little quiet his Conscience, so it being but in the other (*i. e.* small trifling things) secures his other interests also. This excellent knack both assures him a kind of Peace, and yet offers no violence at all to his most vicious propensities.

• And now if after all these evidences, you'll give me leave to add one conjecture I will tell you, that if all the causes why *St. James* his Epistle was so long

long disputed, and with so much difficulty at last acknowledged for Canonical, were closely inspected, I have often thought that something relishing of this humour, would be found among them. The Solifidian Errour had taken deep rooting, and made a large spread (you know) allready, in the followers of *Simon* the Magician and others, and possibly some dregs of it, might be in some others that wore the visor of true Catholics. Now, Sir, these persons very well knew that they had some little shew and appearance of ground for this so pleasing and bewitching a Doctrine, from the acknowledged Epistles of the great Doctor and Apostle of the Gentiles, or at least there was something in them; that might easily be suborned to

countenance the same: whereas now they must for ever quit, and have no tollerable *Salvo* or Argument for it: it being most clearly and irrefragably condemned by this most excellent and needful Epistle.

And now, Sir, if these persons (we have been discoursing about) be not guilty of this fraud, if they have not trodden in this path; I will dare to tell you, that none ever were or did. No men have more fearfully corrupted Christianity, nor debauched it to the patronizing of wickedness and vice; No persons ever preached up a possibility of Salvation upon easier terms; No men have ever given people ground to hope for the Salvation of the Spirit, with less pain and trouble to the flesh than these men have done. I

I do not intend to stay only upon the *Antinomians*, and those various Mad-Sects that have sprung from them; for here plain evidence of the fact renders needless any further depositions. Never did Hell vent an error more pleasing to carnality, than this, which at once evacuates the whole law of God, and declaims against any necessity of obedience to it: Enervates all exhortations and motives to virtue, under pretence of a spiritual freedom; and deliverance from any bondage at all.

And with the like brevity I purpose to pass over the late sprung up and doting Sect among us, called *Quakers*, and their Leaders; men who have calculated a Doctrine much what to the same Meridian,
C 4 that

that have taught people to cast off all respect to the Law of God, as being but the Law of a carnal Commandment, (say they) and wholly to give up themselves to the conduct and guidance of a light within; than which, there was never a fairer inlet offer'd to the spirit of delusion, nor an opportunity given to carnality to consult it's own ease and safety, in debauching the natural Light of Conscience, and putting the reins into the hands and power of Interest and Passion, to corrupt and over-rule the dictates of Reason as themselves please.

Neither do I intend to stay you any longer, with the consideration of the *Anabaptist* and his crew. When I shall but only have mention'd that doctrine of theirs,

theirs, that *Dominion is founded in Grace*; that the wicked of the World have no right nor title to any thing they possess or enjoy, but may very justly be dispossessed thereof by the Saints, who alone are the Heirs of this World, as well as of that to come; you will easily perceive what a pleasant Doctrine this is; how subservient to their own interests (for they alone are these Saints) and worldly designs, and how wholly destructive of all Equity, and Justice, and Charity in the World.

But I shall stay you a little longer with the two more considerable and formidable sorts of dissenters amongst us, who though more sound and Orthodox in many things, yet (I doubt) will scarcely crush this

guilt off their hands, nor approve themselves innocent in this matter.

I will not here enlarge in shewing you, how they have dishonour'd the Christian Religion and brought a scorn upon it, in the sight of the World, by making it a stalking Horse to the most unjust designs, and a Cloak to cover the most horrid impieties and immoralities that the Sun ever beheld acted upon the Stage of any Christian Kingdom; nay, that a modest Heathen would have blush'd at and detested. Nor will I here take notice what a wretched influence this carriage of theirs hath had upon the Opinions and practices of too many among us; how Atheism hath enter'd in at this door, men naturally casting off all honourable thoughts

thoughts of Religion, when they have observed these greatest pretenders to it, use it only as a *Cloak of maliciousness*.

I shall pass all these suggestions only with this wish, That the thoughts of these things may set close upon these mens Souls and Consciences. That which I am more directly concerned in, is to demonstrate my Assertion, That these men have introduced into the World a Notional Religion, and preached up a possibility of Salvation, upon very easie and pleasing Conditions. And this I shall endeavour to do by two *Mediums* and Arguments.

I. First, I could easily refer you to many of their printed Books and Sermons, in which it would be a very easie task to remark to you several things, which

which would clearly convince them to be men that regard not so much to preach the truth in sincerity, as to gull their Auditors into an high esteem and admiration of them, by the pleasant Notions that they treat them withal. But, Sir, our late reading the Excellent Author of the *Friendly Debate* will spare me (I think) that pains, since the memory of those instances is yet I suppose fresh with you. I shall therefore only propose this to you or any other that will but read those things: Whether ever any things were more plainly contrived to please the flesh; to bolster up mens hopes of Heaven upon easier terms, to decry and disparage the narrow way of obedience to Christs commands, and indeed to supercede wholly
any

any necessity of regarding any Evangelical Precepts? He that but considers the inferences that the Preacher there makes from that Text, *Isah. 40. 11. He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young*; which Text yet he is not affraid to say the spirit of Christ brought to his hands, and that his Soul had tasted much sweetness by what Christ gave in upon that subject.

I say, he that but reads that stuff, I know not presently whether I should say, it will more tempt his Gravity to smile, or excite his Passion to bewail the misery of those, that shall so attend to such an Impostor, and the infelicity of the times wherein

in such shall be permitted to infect and poison peoples Souls. Would ever any but a Madman, or worse, have given encouragement to people to come full of sin and wickedness unto Christ? and proclaimed his readiness of accepting all that can but cry *Meih*, though never such great Whores or swell'd with wickedness? What excellent interpretations the flesh will make of such illation, is too too easie to predict. And indeed the effects have answer'd the probabilities; men have learned an art of believing they shall be saved and accepted by Christ, if they can but hope lustily, though they be never so notorious workers of iniquity; nay the bigger they are with sin, the more acceptable they shall be to him. And little

the better Inferences can be made from that other so famed a person, that the same Author instanceth in: For Gods sake tell me, what sense can be made of all that canting, of running to the Promise, and sucking of the Promise, and lying flat upon the Promise, when there's not one word of attending to the condition of it, so much as hinted. Or what inference (I pray) can be drawn from it, but this? that if a person can have but the courage, to venture boldly upon a promise without more ado, he shall be accepted by Christ Jesus?

There is no doubt, Sir, but these precious promises are the Christian's great Treasure, his Ray and his Comfort. But surely he that honestly directs people to affiance in them, should inform

form them that these are but conditionals, and 'tis folly to expect the performance, without regarding the terms upon which that is made: that it will be found at last a damning Adultery, to hug and caress the promises, while men regard not at all the Precepts, but willingly pass them by, and leave them to neglect and oblivion.

Now, Sir, that these things are truly and justly charged upon these persons, that Author makes sure and evident, by referring to the very Book, and page wherein such things and words are found. And if any man require more instances of this fact, I could easily quote him, men of great reputation among them at this day, who either are yet alive, or whose memory is held precious

cious by them. But because I intend but a Letter to you and not a Treatise, an hours diversion upon this subject and no more. I shall pass the instancing at large in so many printed Sermons and licensed Books of theirs, as I easily could. And

2. Secondly propose to your thoughts, and your Companies notice, the consideration of some remarkable Doctrines that lye sparsedly up and down in these Books.

And first what think you of the great pains some have taken in perswading people to look to their election? and endeavour by all means to secure that in the first place? and of the great motive added to enforce this perswasion? *viz.* Because then their greatest work is done in a manner, their great fear is over,
for

for then they are safe; they need never doubt any danger of falling away; they need not be further troubled, for their sins shall not, nay cannot prejudice them, and however it is at present, yet the event at last will be certainly joyful.

I condemn not all preaching about this matter, but I would have it done in the Apostolical method: first, mind people of their calling, perswade them to adorn that, to walk answerable to the rules and purposes of that, and then tell them if you please, that by this means they shall assure their election. Let them not trouble themselves so much to pry into Gods secrets, as berake themselves to their own duty. He that walketh humbly with his God, and through his Grace continueth
in

in the paths of Mercy, and Righteousness, let him not doubt, but he shall be safe, and his name found written in the Book of Life.

This procedure were Christian and honest, when the other is directly conducive; first to nourish a needles curiosity, and bold groundless presumption, and afterwards to cause a careless remissness about any thing further.

But I wish this were the worst, they were chargable withal. What think you of the accounts we have from these men of the business of justification, by a bare empty Faith? a Faith that is to do no more but barely accept of Christ, and boldly lay hold on his Salvation, and strongly believe it self justified? How often have you heard
that

that abused Text of St. Paul, *Rom. 4. 5.* Suborned to patronize and defend this loose Doctrine? *He that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for righteousness.* What wild and horrible inferences have we known made from these words? How often have we heard the Faith of *Abraham*, in that particular act of it, the believing against Hope, made a pattern and president of the Faith that justifieth? and this inference made from it, that a man must believe to be pardon'd even against Hope, *i. e.* He must firmly believe he shall enjoy all the blessed priviledges of Christs Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Intercession against all imaginable probabilities; contrary to all rational grounds

grounds of Hope, and indeed wholly contrary to all the fixed Orders and Laws of Christ Jesus: As if that Faith that could believe impossibilities were the the only saving one. If this be true, what can the most sensual Sinner desire more? who is he that will breathe after an active Faith, such an one as is to work by Love? which the same Apostle calls keeping Christs Commands, and without which he counts all Faith vain and damning. And indeed he is told by these men, that such a Faith is needless, all the work of Faith is only to believe that Christ hath done all for him. You know the Book in which these things are *asserted* asserted, and if any require it, I shall quote the place of it, and yet this Book is printed
with

with the particular commendams of Mr. *Caryll*, Mr. *Burroughs*, Mr. *Stronge*, Mr. *Sprigge*, and Mr. *Prittie*, all of them considerable persons in their Party; and I cannot omit reminding of you, what an honourable Title it hath usurped: no worse I assure you than the *Marrow of modern Divinity*.

And Consonant to this Tenet, you will find some other pieces of these Mens Divinity, as that, (for Example) That good Works, Holiness of Life, the Vow of Obedience, &c. are not at all necessary as to the business of procuring Salvation; But yet indeed (for meer shame will force them to say something here) they will follow in the justified person by way of gratitude, and upon that

that account the man is obliged to them ; but otherwise the great benefit depends not at all upon them, but is already, before any of these things can be thought on, done for him. Just as the ten Lepers (you know) were equally cured, though but one returned to give thanks to his Physician. And truly, Sir, if this Doctrine be allowed; if all the obligation to holiness be only ingenuity, Let men be but assured that this cure shall be wrought for them, Leave but the return unto their generosity, and I dare secure you, the odds shall still continue, and for one civil and grateful Samaritane, there shall always be (at least) nine unthankful Jews.

And no very great matter if there be so, for in these mens Opinions even this ingratitude shall

shall fix no great guilt upon the man, nor at all hazard his damnation. And what do you think the reason is? why a goodly one truly; God seeth no sins in his people, and this is maintained from the words of the Eastern Conjuror, *he hath not beheld Iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel.* And upon this account it cometh to pass, that the grossest acts of wickedness, such as in another man deserves no favourabler a Character than damning impieties; yet, when committed by those that can by this Faith believe themselves Saints, shall pass under the fine name, of the Saints infirmities, unavoidable slips, and such as the lap of Christs merciful Mantle will easily cover, and conceal from the eyes of his Heavenly Father.

ther. And here I cannot forbear transcribing to you one passage out of the lately mention'd Book. You shall find the good *Evangelista* instructing his *Neophytus* in these words. "In

"case you be at any time by
"reason of the weakness of
"your Faith, and strength of
"your temptations, drawn
"aside, and prevailed with to
"transgress any of Christs Com-
"mandments, beware you do
"not thereupon take occasion
"to call Christs love to you in-
"to question, but believe as
"firmly, that he loveth you as
"dearly as he did before you
"thus transgressed: for this is
"a certain Truth: As no good
"in you, or done by you, did,
"or can move Christ to love
"you the more, so no evil in
"you, or done by you, can

D

"move

“move him to love you the less. I pray, Sir, tell me, is not here an excellent Evangelist? I dare assure you none of all the four in our Bibles are like him: indeed these words need no Comment, it will puzzle the Devil to invent plainer, or those that shall more strongly nourish profaneness and presumption. These will easily reconcile Saintship and the grossest impieties, and render men prone to believe, that the most detestable Crimes cannot blot their evidences for Heaven; seeing these may be but the stains of beloved Sons. And, Sir, if you consult the 39th. page of the *Evangelium Armatum*, you'll find the Author quoting the words of a greater person among these men, than ever the Author of that Book was, whose assertions

ons there, can by no art whatever be construed to any better sense, than the former. Where, Drunkenness, nay this often repeated, Lying, rash Unchristian Rayling, Disobedience to Superiours, Schism, Sacrilege (*i. e.* wronging the Church) are asserted to be consistent with true grace, and competent to a truly godly person. Nay a man must exceed *Peter's* Perjury, *Lot's* Drunkenness and repeated Incest, *Solomon's* gross Idolatries, and strange uncleanness with 700. Wives and 300. Concubines, or else not merit the name of a notorious ungodly person. And now, Sir, if these things be true the Daughters of *Gath* may well dance, no Philistine needs fear the divine vengeance. These things are evidences too clear of what I

contend for; and yet (if you'll promise to have patience) I'll cast in some others more. And what say you to this Doctrine in the first place. That a man may safely follow Providence contrary to some known Precepts? and that God many times calls his people, by some signal acts of his Providence to follow him in untrodden ways, nay prohibited paths? No consequence was ever safer drawn from any position, than this may from this Doctrine, viz. that it is lawful and just to venture upon a forbidden action, when Providence offers a fair and safe opportunity, and a promising success. What is this but even the old Pagan Maxim, that even Tully himself detests. *Prosperum scelus vocatur virtus* ? and God must needs

needs be thought to approve that, which in his wise Providence he is pleased to permit to attain success. How often have we been told (in some solemn Sermons of Thanksgiving before the late long Parliament) by those great Masters in *Israel* (for none else ever preached before them at such times) that now God had plainly decided the controverſie, and all might ſee (but the obſtinately blind) who had the juſter part of the quarrel. You will find the Learned *Hammond* purpoſely writing a Treatiſe againſt this fancy, and all men might ſee that there was a cauſe, the Doctor did not ſeign an Antagoniſt to combat withal; for this *Goliath* had challenged all the Armies of *Israel*. Now certainly, Sir, it muſt needs appear very

strange, that those men who had not only renounced Heathenism, but undertook to reform the very best reformation of Christian Religion, should yet so plainly discover themselves to be Turks and Pagans, as they did in this instance. Who, by vertue of this Doctrine, may not warrantably undertake any thing, that he hath any tollerable hopes of being able to perform? this will secure and justifie the violation of all Law, all Justice, all Equity, where a great advantage seems to encourage. Neither need any of these mens Profelytes doubt whether he may make this illation or no; for even these his Leaders have made it for him, and warranted his Logick in it. You have heard of one of them encouraging

raging the Parliament and City to those facinorous barbarities, in these words. " Let no Law
" hinder you, *si jus violandum*,
" if Law be broken, it is for a
" Crown, and therefore for Re-
" ligion. As if success in that would hallow any immoralities done for it, and that it was but weakly said of *Job*, that men might not lye and speak wickedly for God. And again,
" That which is best, though
" Evil, will be counted good
" after Reformation as he is
" counted innocent who es-
" capes at tryal. No matter though the action be never so evil now, yet when it hath attained it's designed end, it will be allowed and praised.

Give me leave, Sir, to acquaint you with another pretty invention of these Casuists, than

which the mystery of Jesuitism never invented a neater, to warrant any vice; it's a distinction of the great *Marshall's*, before the House of Peers. The question proposed is about the legality of taking up Arms, *i. e.* against the King, for that's the intent of it. He had been acquainting them with the successfulness of the Churches Weapons of old, Prayers and Tears, &c. from which he brings in the doubting Christian as taking advantage, to argue against the lawfulness of using any other Weapons now. To which he very gravely with a profound dexterity answers, That Christian men might be considered in a double capacity, as Christians, or as Men. Now as Christians (he grants) it unlawful to use any other arms;

arms ; but as men they might
safely do so. “ We use no
“ other Weapons than these
“ we have told you of, as we
“ are Christians. These only
“ are proper and peculiar to us
“ as meer Christians ; but the
“ Weapons that we enjoy as
“ we are Christians, do not de-
“ prive us of those we enjoy in
“ the capacity of men. And we
“ challenge in this no more,
“ than we might lawfully use,
“ if we were Papists or Turks,
“ if we were Pagans , Jews,
“ or Indians. And truly, let
me tell you, in this he speaks
a great Truth, let men be Turks,
Pagans, or Infidels, nay Devils,
they can do no worse, in this
truly they quite put off the ha-
bit of Christians , and shew
clearly ’twas the Devil that ap-
peared in the Mantle of the

Prophet. How happy were all profligate Christians if this Plea or Salvo would hold! what a Fool were he that could not tell God Almighty, that his debaucheries and villanies were not committed by him as a Christian, but as a man? and therefore though the man were culpable, yet the Christian was innocent and might be saved. Tell me soberly, did you ever in all your reading, meet with a Quirk of more mischievous consequence to all the purposes of goodness and vertue? or which might with more ease be extended to the excusing and defending of any or all the grossest anomies, that ever were or could be committed by any that can but call himself a Christian? Well fare thee *Marshall*, say I, thy Disciples may well thank

thank thee, and celebrate thy memory; never man smooth'd the way to Heaven more than thou hast done; never might a Conscience be quieted upon easier terms. Thou shalt never be called more the *Geneva Bull* (by my consent) that only leads the herd to water; but the *Monoceros* rather; dip but this Horn into any water; and all may confidently drink of it without fear of poyson; this will make any thing wholesom.

And yet, Sir, as excellent a Salvo as this is for a troubled Conscience, I think I can tell you of another that cometh very little short of it. It is that which the most excellent Author of the decay of Christian Piety among us, hath taken notice of for us. And that it may loose nothing of its native

tive elegancy and weight by
my imperfect reporting of it,
I shall borrow his own words
to express it in. "I shall re-
"fer it to consideration, whe-
"ther that method that hath
"been used to quiet some Con-
"sciences, be not apt to stupi-
"fie more, when I see one who
"from his present Reigning
"Sins, regularly infers the ill-
"ness of his State, that is yet
"by his Casuist diverted from
"that prospect, and bid look
"back to see whether no part
"of his life afforded any evi-
"dence of true Grace, and if he
"can but remember any such
"time, is warranted to make
"that his *Epocha* from whence
"to date his infallible assu-
"rance; is told that that im-
"mortal Seed though it may
"be covered, yet cannot be
"choaked,

“choaked, but will most cer-
“tainly spring up into eternal
“life. When I say, I see this
“easie remedy prescribed to
“his fears, ’twill be obvious for
“me to compound my self a re-
“medy from the same ingredi-
“ents, to fix my eye upon some
“mark of Regeneration, which
“at some time or other I either
“have, or phancied to have had
“upon me, and with the stedfast
“beholding of that, as of the
“Brazen Serpent, be fortified
“against all the venom of my
“fiery lusts. Cast in this one
“stick, and with it sweeten all
“the Waters of *Marah*, secure
“me against all the bitter ef-
“fects of my present guilts. I
need make no addition to this
good mans complaint, we shall
not need to call in the help of
any *Augur* to tell us, what a fa-
tal

tal influence this is probable, nay certain to have upon mens practice. For who is he whose Conscience hath been always so callous, as not sometimes to awake him, and put him upon sorrow and holy resolves? where's the Sinner to be found, whose Paroxisms have been so constant, as never to afford him any lucid intervals? it will be a difficult task to assign any such an one especially when we call to mind, that even a *Pharaoh*, though the signal instance for hardness of heart (by reason both of his own natural resolute wilfulness, and of a further degree, super-induced upon that by a just punitive act of God) yet at some times appears as a real Convert, confesseth his Sin, deprecates the justly deserved wrath, promiseth amendment.

mendment for the future, and begs the holy mans Prayers for the obtaining of a blessing. It is scarcely to be imagined, but that the most prodigiously profligate Christian, can call to mind sometimes, in which some better things have forced way into his thoughts. And if he can do this (in these mens Divinity) he is safe, the Seed of God remains in him, this may suppress all fears of his present guilt, or future danger, if he can but sit still, and be content, God will in time work his own work, and he may rest assured that he shall at last become an accepted Saint.

But yet this is not so easie a way to conclude a man in the possibility of Saintship; but yet I can represent to you another as easie that will clearly evince the

the actuality, and prove a man really to be a Saint already ; and that is a stout opposing of *Babylon* , and seperating from the Communion of *Sodom*. I will not stay to observe to you that the great Charity of these men could afford no better names than these, not only to *Rome*, but to their Mother the Church of *England*. She was spiritual *Sodom*, the *Babylon* out of which the Saints were to flee ; her Liturgy as bad as the Mass ; her Priests, Priests of *Baal*, and dumb Dogs ; all her Ceremonies plain rags of Anti-Christ : and the whole Constitution a limb of the Beast, and the mystery of iniquity. That which I am more concerned in, is to let you understand not only what a necessity hath been preached up of opposing this Whore,

Whore, and flying all Communion with her, lest men per-took of her sins; but what great weight hath been laid upon so doing: this hath been sufficient to assure Saintship, and to evince a man an undoubted Child of God. He that could have given but some considerable evidence of this, but especially of his having been any way instrumental in pulling down the Walls of this *Babylon*, of assisting and promoting the Cause, of helping the Lord against the mighty. I say, he that could but produce any evidence of this, in the late Times, needed plead no more for his Canonization. One such Heroick act of piety as this was as effectual to obtain his being cryed up for a holy Saint, amongst these men heretofore,

as

as two or three counterfeit Miracles and a large sum beside could be to obtain a mans being Canonized in the Court of *Rome*.

This was esteemed so meritorious an act as would (without all doubt) atone and expiate all other crimes. This holy zeal would not only bring a blessing upon the *Phinehas* himself, but entail it also upon his whole House, and obtain it the name of a very godly Family. One signal expression of this love to their poor Sion, would certainly cover a multitude of the greatest Sins. It will be needless and troublesome to you, to refer you to all the places, in which this is laid down as a sure mark of a Saint, I will only tell you, time was, when no less persons than the great
Mr.

Mr. Love, and Mr. Calamy pleaded it as marks, the one of his integrity, at his Tryal, and the other of his *μετάνοια ἀμεταμέλητος*, in his Apology against Mr. *Burton*. And the Author of the Debate, you know, offers to make it evident, (and if he did not, another easily might) that the taking the solemn League and Covenant was made generally a sign of holiness, and those looked upon as the Dogs of the World, not worthy of the ordinary Crums (the common benefit of the Law) that refused to swear to it. I am apt to imagine you will look upon this as an extra-canonical rule to judge Saintship by, and such as our great Master no where gives the least warrant for, or intimation of. And indeed 'twere very strange if he should;
Pride,

Pride and Covetousness, and a greedy Revenge might as safely be put into the Saintsevidences for Heaven, as this. For I dare assert it no impossible thing to demonstrate that some one, or all of those, have been the common causes and Parents of this. Some men were too proud to brook superiority, and some were covetous, and the Church was thought too rich; and some had missed preferment (as 'twas once told the great *Calamy*) or received (as they thought) some other injury, from the Church, and to revenge these (as *Arrius* and *Novatus* of old) resolved to work (to their utmost) her final ruin. And truly the temptation was fair, since that was the Characteristick note of a Saint and true Son of *Israel*; and the way to
secure

secure a better name, than either Son or Daughter of the Church could enjoy. Certainly if this evidence were real and infallible, they had a mighty multitude of Saints, and more than any sober man can possibly grant them. And (to conclude this reflexion) if this be to be a Saint, *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis.*

I shall not stay you longer in instancing in other pretty Doctrines of theirs, as the absoluteness of the promises, than which, never was a fairer inlet for a bold inert presumption. The Recumbency and rowling upon a naked Christ, than which (as the people understood it) never was a Doctrine better fitted to cry down (or dispense with the neglect of) any great care of real holiness. I am
afraid,

afraid, I have tyred you with these instances already, and given you too much cause of sorrow, that ever they should find Patrons among those that called themselves of the Reformed Religion. I shall therefore add no more, but only two short intimations *ex abundanti*.

1. And first of all I shall confidently dare to tell you, that for one Sermon of Obedience, I will shew you twenty of Faith; for one Sermon that you can shew me preached by these men upon *Gal. 5. 6.* I will shew you ten upon that *Rom. 4. 5.* for one Sermon of Justice (unless in that horrid Notion, in which 'twas cryed for, and preached up against the Earl of *strafford*, the Archbishop *Land*, and at last against the best of Kings) of mercy, of walking
humbly

humbly with God, of abiding in our own Calling, and doing our own work ; of meekness and studying to be quiet, &c. I will undertake to shew you forty against cursed Neutrality, against Laodicean Lukewarmness, about the marks of Saints, about the excellency of Faith, about getting into Christ, &c. Some of which seem to establish wickedness by a Law, and none of which teach men a necessity of practical holiness ; but prompt them to a new formal kind of Religion, and an easier and nearer way to Heaven and its bliss, than ever the former Ages knew of. I know these persons (if any should ever chance to see these Papers) will be forward to justify some of these subjects, that I seem to accuse their Sermons for treating so

so commonly of; And so will I also, but it is with this limitation, provided that they dwell not thus in generals, but proceed plainly to the particular ways and methods in which such duties are to be done. God forbid, that either you or I should be thought to be persons that condemn all preaching about Faith, and all persuasions to people to endeavour to get an interest in Christ Jesus. No, Sir, I know these are needful and wholsom theams; but what I condemn is mens roving in general about these things; which indeed may work upon mens Passions, heat their heads, but not at all rightly inform the judgment, nor benefit the life of action. What benefit gain I by hearing a loud Harangue about the excellency of Faith?

Faith? the happiness of being interested in Christ? while I neither am told the true nature of the one, nor directed to the right and proper means of obtaining the other? And here, Sir, there comes into my head, an Advice which the late famous Bishop of *Down* gave his Clergy at a publick Visitation (it is printed with many others, which I heartily wish all our Spiritual men would diligently peruse and Regard) very pertinent to our present business.

“Do not spend your Sermons
“in general and indefinite
“things, as in Exhortations to
“the people to get Christ, to be
“united unto Christ, and things
“of the like unlimited signifi-
“cation. But tell them in every
“duty what are the measures,
“what circumstances, what in-
E “stru-

“struments, and what is the
“particular minute meaning of
“every advice. For generals
“not explicated, do but fill the
“peoples heads with empty No-
“tions, and their mouths with
“perpetual unintelligible talk;
“but their hearts remain emp-
“ty, and themselves are not
“edified. There’s a great deal
of spiritual prudence in the ad-
vice, and truly as much truth
in the reason to enforce it. Ge-
nerals affect very little, and to
talk of getting into Christ, and
rowing upon Christ, &c. is
but like shooting at Rovers,
which indeed may exercise
peoples eyes, divert them a little
while, find them something to
talk high of, and contend
about, but very rarely or ne-
ver hits the true mark. Let
them but treat of these things,
according

according to the precedent advice, and they shall never find me in the number of their accusers. But otherwise I shall take liberty to tell them, that these being handled in the common usual method, serve but to entoxicate peoples heads, and divert them from the main and great business of Religion, which is keeping the commands of Christ Jesus.

I can scarce forbear here to acquaint you with another pretty practice of these men, and that is, the judging mens sanctity, the truth of their Regeneration, by a certain mode and form of speaking. I do not mean the Dramatist's twang of Nose (though you cannot but have observed how modish that was once among the Saints, and you know the

Doctor at *Oxford* we once counted perfect in it) but a peculiar way of wording things: by which men should be judged by them, as the *Gileadites* discovered the Children of *Ephraim* of old by *shiboleth* at the passages of *Jordan*. I know the man (and could bring him to attest what I am going to tell you) that having before the late pack of Fryars, given a handsom and rational account of his conversion, was nevertheless dismissed without satisfaction, or any hopes thereof; 'till he was instructed by one more ingenuous than the rest (and afterwards by good fortune made his friend) what the reason was; which was this. What he had delivered to his Brethren was fair and plausible, but it took not, for want of being

ing worded in the sanctified language; for whereas he discoursed of Christ Jesus, and his Saviour, &c. he should have said the Lord Christ, the Lord Christ, &c. which when he readily used the second time of audience, he presently passed, and was accepted as a Saint of the right fashion. Sir, what consequences may be drawn from these things, will be evident to the meanest Logician, viz. that these men strangely debauched Christianity, and had other measures to judge themselves and others by, than those in the Gospel. But this is not

2. The second thing I purposed to advert, but this, upon this account you shall find those men openly traduced, publicly defamed and opposed; who

honestly pursuing and designing the interests of mens Souls, and keeping close to the great Maxims and design of Christianity, have bent all their endeavours to plant a real holiness in men, and taught them, that all expectations of a future happiness without it, were groundless and vain. I will give you two instances of this, which I know you will remember. One is Dr. *Hammond* upon the writing of his excellent Practical Catechism. If you consult the printed Papers between him, and Mr. *Cheyne*, you will easily find what the chief matters of controversy were. The Learned Catechist is for exalting the Evangelical Precepts, and asserts our Saviours setting the former commands at a higher pitch, as requiring a more sub-
limited

limited degree and measure of Holiness and Righteousness, than ever was called for under the Judaical Oeconomy. And in this he shews himself not to be singular, but consonant to the whole stream of Antiquity, as his many Quotations make clear and evident. Now what good Christian will gainsay this? or quarrel with the good man for asserting of it? Yet this doth Mr. *Cheyne*, for fear (forsooth) lest the Law of God should be disparag'd hereby; which *David* voucheth to have been pure and perfect. And so doubtless it was for that dispensation, till the fulness of time for a further and clearer manifestation was come. Another contest is about the business of Justification, and whether the Catechists Doctrine in that par-

ticular, or Mr. *Cheyne*'s, be most conducive to the real purposes of holy living, or evacuating the necessity of Evangelical Sanctity, I shall readily trust you or any considering person to judge. But I am sensible I should be railed at as injurious to Mr. *Cheyne* and the party, should I not tell you, that besides these, there was another matter controverted in those Papers, which was about the prime Notion of the third Precept. Where the Doctor seems to allow a greater liberty of swearing and profaning Gods name, than Mr. *Cheyne*. But as to this, it is easie to observe that malice only framed the accusation, of which the Doctor sufficiently clears himself, and his whole Doctrine in all other instances, may assure and warrant

warrant any mans safety, in becoming his Compurgator in it. I will not here add, what might be too justly charged upon Mr. *Cheyne* and that party, that their great care of that Precept, and the two others, between which it is placed in the Decalogue, will advantage them very little, towards being esteemed great pressors of Holiness, while they appear so very regardless of the other commands of the second Table. I will readily confess indeed, never any Generation of men cryed out louder against Idoll-worship. Never were there men that seemed more to fear an Oath in ordinary converse (though perjury were a small thing). Never men appeared more solicitous lest the Sabbath should be profaned. But if you'l not be satisfied with

their respect to these three Precepts, if you'll not count them holy persons upon these accounts only, you shall scarcely have more. Nor any juster cause to give them that title, than you would have to call that Jew an holy person, whose hands were full of bribery and blood, yet thought it piacular to pronounce the *resurreximus*. Alas! Sir, its an old trick, and very few have been more prejudicial to the true design and purport of Religion; to seem zealous towards God, but regardless of men, to be mighty exact as to Matters of Piety, but quite neglective of honesty. And the reason may easily be guessed at; there's little of difficulty, little of mortification, little opposition of a mans dear interests in these things, in

compa-

comparison of what there is in being righteous, and just, and chaste, and merciful, and charitable, &c. and therefore as of old, those engrossed the whole, the all of the Jews care, as things that would expiate and atone (they thought) these smaller guilts; so we have seen it of late amongst these people, no men have been more careful to appear splendid and famous for their piety towards God, whilst Justice and Charity, Integrity and Uprightness, have been neglected as absolute things, and no way becoming the new Saints.

Another parallel instance I shall give you, is of Mr. *Fowler* in his late excellent Treatise of the design of Christianity. How very ill this Book hath comported with the Genious

nious of these men, may be collected from the clamours raised against it : that it would be prejudicial to the merits of Christ Jesus, injurious to Gods free Grace, and would teach men to take off their eyes from Christ, and to build their hopes of Salvation upon their own endeavours ; and upon these accounts, and for these great Reasons, a Book must presently be written against it, to antidote the infection and poyson, that otherwise the people might suck from it. I am not concerned to shew you, how utterly causeless and unjust these surmises were, the Gentleman is able enough to vindicate himself, especially from such accusors ; that which is more pertinent for me, is by this to let you see, which way the humour of these people

people leads. They had preach-
ed up a more easie way of Sal-
vation, but this Book would
discover and betray the im-
posture, shew the people, how
they had been gull'd and cheat-
ed, and perhaps in time open
their eyes and make them wise ;
turn their present great admi-
ration of these their Leaders
into a just indignation, and
cause them in a little time to
detest those as men not worthy
to live, whom at present they
can esteem little less than Gods ;
to whom they can readily Sa-
crifice even all their goods. And
(to add a little more strength
to this instance) you know, we
have been informed how Mr.
Baxter hath sped among them,
for daring to justifie the Argu-
ment of that Book. Though
(methinks this may be said for
him

him to his Brethren, that he hath done it with as great caution, as many distinctions, as studious a weariness of wronging the *Palladium*, as wit can possibly contrive. Yet for all this even he cannot escape a suspicious censure. From whence 'tis obvious to collect, that this is the *noli me tangere*, this is the Talisman that secures the peoples affection to them. And therefore must with all possible care and secrecie be preserved; this is that great *Diana* against whom not a word shall be spoken, but there shall presently be a tumult amongst these Silver-Smiths, who live by making and selling shrines of this great Goddess. For, Sir, I dare be confident and peremptory in this belief, that it is utterly impossible for any person of true
Christian.

Christian Principles to quarrel or be offended with the great Assertion of that Book; but that other considerations engage men into an opposition of it, and particularly that which I have been all this while endeavouring to prove these men guilty of, *i. e.* the love of a dry empty Notional easie way, of Religion. And this I assign as the first (and indeed main) Cause of what we are enquiring after. In which if I have been too prolix, forgive me, and your trouble shall be shorter in the rest that follow.

2. Another Reason of this may possibly be a mighty shew of Zeal in all religious performances. Of this you will find these men always most careful; and truly but for this there were nothing extraordinary in their Religion;

Religion ; nothing to tempt men into an admiration of it. And therefore by this they labour to conceal, or supply the defects and imperfections of it ; that what is wanting in substance and reallity, may be supplied by appearance and pageantry. How successful a method this is to captivate the minds of the people, he is of no observation that cannot tell you. Pompous shews and fair appearances do mightily affect and work upon the multitude ; and more strongly enchant their admiration and charm their reverence, than the most solid and excellent things, when not attended with these advantageous representations. It was not without good reason therefore observed long since by *Tully* ; and others before him, that

that Gesture is the thing most principally to be regarded by an Orator; since a man that is lucky in that, and by it hits the humour of his Auditory, shall prevail more thereby, than by ten of the most rational Arguments, that he can fortifie his designed perswasion withal. The people generally judge with their eyes; and the Comedian too truly represents many as beholding with their mouths: and therefore cunning men use to intrap them by complying with this humour, by treating them with things gorgeous and fair; and instead of dealing rationally with their judgments, entertain them only with such things, as may cause them to stare and admire, and by this means commonly are successful.

You

You cannot but oftentimes (as you have walked out into the Fields about *Oxford*) have observed one pretty sleight that the Fowlers have to catch Larks withal; which is, by fixing a red Cross, set thick with little pieces of a Looking-Glass, near their Nets, in a bright Sun-shine Morning: this mightily glistening, and casting abroad a mighty appearance, draws the poor Lark into its admiration; which while the poor Bird stays to gaze upon, himself is easily Captiv'd and made a prey. I know you'll pardon the homeliness of the Emblem; for so have I seen the Hunters for Souls use a method not much unlike to this: which is, by all means to make a fair shew, a very great amazing appearance, which while silly people have
stared

stared at, they have soon admired, and by that means been easily ensnared, not only to espouse the errours, but revere and honour the persons of the subtil Impostors. And that I may bring this discourse close to the present instance; it is obvious to observe, that among all the instances of pageantry in Religion, there is none that Seducers have been more careful of, and successful in; than a mighty loud Zeal, and extraordinary fervency of Spirit, in all their religious performances. In this (you will find) they have always endeavour'd to exceed the true servants of God, and thereby hoped to disparage them. Let me present you with one instance of this, recorded in the Old Testament, it is the carriage of the Priests of *Baal*,
in

in that famous Sacrifice of theirs, wherein they contended for honour and respect with the Prophet *Elijah*, before King *Ahab* and all *Israel*. If you read the story ('tis recorded *1 Kings 18.*) you will soon find, how for all the marks and signs of a great fervent Zeal, they far exceeded even *Elijah* himself; who yet (you know) is looked upon as the great and chief instance of the Zealotick Spirit. They addressed themselves to the Sacrifice with all possible signs of a great and grave seriousness, performed it with all the marks of a raptural transported Zeal, continue their supplications several hours, even with the most passionate fervency, nay seem so far besides themselves by the vehemency of their Zeal, as to
cut

cut and gash themselves, and turn cruel unto, and regardless of their own flesh: While on the other side, the Prophet calmly betakes himself to the repairing of Gods Altar, quietly, and without noise orders his Sacrifice, and offers up his devotion evenly, in a Prayer more concise and short than that of our Saviour. Tell me, Sir, which of these the people were most likely to slave at and admire? Sure its no difficult matter to conjecture. How could they mistrust the Religion of such zealous devotees? how could they chuse almost but admire the zeal and fervour of such worshippers? prefer these Idolatrous Priests, before the Lords Prophet? and the glistering and amazing service and worship of *Baal*, before the
less

less pompous service of the God of *Israel*? If the succeeding miracle had not umpired the contest, I can easily foresee on which side the votes would have fallen.

How well the ignominious name of *Baal's* Priests (which with so much virulency they have cast upon the Orthodox Clergy heretofore) may become these Preachers themselves in other respects, I shall not contend; but in this (I fear) you may truly say, *Ovo prognati eodem*, they seem very near of Kin, and both to have the same art and method of deceiving. What have you thought of these men, when you have beheld the strange antick gestures, the ludicrous postures of some addressing themselves to Prayer? the strange amazing violent

violencies that some have forced themselves into, in that performance? So as even to hale and gasp for breath at every period, while the poor admiring people below, have taken these for mighty agitations of the Spirit, and been as ready to adore when the men came down, as the *Israelites* were *Moses*, after his glorious converse with God in the Mount.

How often have you seen a Preacher heat himself, beyond the need of any vestments? throwing off his Cloak, nay and his Gloves too, as great impediments to the holy performance, squeeking, and roaring beyond the example of any Lunatick. Sometimes speaking in a tolerable tone, and presently again crying out as if under some immediate distraction?

tion? While the people with great amazement have gaped upon him, and when he hath finished, given him this honourable *Encomium*, well, hee's a rare man, a man mighty zealous for the Lord, a powerful Preacher, and one that hath taken abundance of pains that day; to the cherishing and refreshing of whose wearied Spirits, the female Profelytes are commonly very actively contributive.

If any man be so uncharitable towards me, as to imagine me an Enemy to Zeal in religious performances, upon the account of this period, or that this discourse intends the disparaging a fervency of Spirit in serving the Lord; I shall take the freedom to tell him, he uncharitably mistakes both. No
man

man more heartily wisheth, that all the Clergy would be grave, and serious, and zealous in all their publick services, and you can witness for me how much I have lamented, and sometimes freely blamed some mens remissness and coldness herein : but this I will readily acknowledge to all such persons, that as I have an Apostolick Warrant for commending of Zeal only in a good matter ; so I think I have the same, for requiring the expressions of it, in a due manner also, with which (I am apt to believe) the theatrical ludicrous postures of some men, do no way comport.

3. Another thing that perhaps may be influential on this business, is a very great specious seeming Sanctity in carriage,

age, and common deportment. Sir, the *ἱερὸς καὶ βασιλικὸς*, the Sheeps-Cloathing hath always been worn by all the Wolves that have broke into the Church, and the Spirit of Heresie and Schism, hath ever been careful to appear in the garb of an Angel of Light. If you should search all the Ecclesiastical Antiquities, you would constantly find, that almost all the Heresiarchs that have disturbed the Church and its peace, have ever been extraordinary pretenders to Sanctity; sometimes in their Doctrines, but allways in their carriage; and under this vizard and disguise have done most mischief. For though all novelties are strangely taking with the inconsiderate multitude (who are even naturally new-fangled and changeable)

able) yet when they appear thus dressed and habited, then they quite fascinate, and strongly charm their high opinions and admiration; they are quickly drawn to wonder at and extol them. And truly when they are once brought into these circumstances, they are then as heated wax, ready to receive any impression, that their admired Leaders shall please to stamp them with. This our great Enemy knowing very well, hath taken great care always to send forth his Emissaries in this garb: and therefore, you know, the great Apostle in his characterising of these Factors, omits not, to put this into the description, that they have *μὲντοι ἐν δόξῃ*, a very great and glorious form and shew of Godliness.

I shall not bring my Charity in question, by disputing whether these persons *ισοβητα* may not well admit the diminutive attendant *μικροτης*, or no. I am certain then (if ever this came to the notice of any of them) I should be exclaimed against, as a condemnor of the Saints, and one that spoke against the Generation of Gods Children. But this I will tell you, that if it be but a Form, yet 'tis well trimmed; if all be only personated, the Actors are excellent Comicks; if it be not *castè*, yet *cantè* it is; if it be only a paint, 'tis very lively: It would go near the puzzling of you (I think) to instance in any pharisaick nicety in outward Conversation, which I should not be able to match in these men. No men ever were better studied

died in all the little things that make a fair shew, in the sight of the vulgar, and carry with them any appearance of piety: no men ever were exacter at Oral or gestural Sanctity than they are. What their hearts are, God and their own Consciences know; we will not judge them.

Now, Sir, I need not tell you, of what mighty advantage this is to them, in this instance of gaining respect from their followers. I wish that some of our own Clergy, would consider how possible it is that some of them, may be contributive here, and how by their carelessness they become foils the more to set off their Adversaries glory. It is a wounding spectacle to see the carelessness of some of these; they little con-

sider (besides their own heavy guilt) what cause they give these Enemies to blaspheme their holy Religion; and what advantage those gain hereby towards the assuring their own dear reputation; they greedily gape for these falls, and they know how there-out to suck no small advantage.

4. Another Method by which these Persons attract a great veneration from their followers, is, the suffering a seeming Persecution, and that (as they endeavour to make them believe) for Conscience and Righteousness sake. Among all the Saints, whose names are eminent, and famous in the Dyp-tichs of the Church, there are none that have more justly been honoured with the highest *En-logium*, than the holy Martyrs, who

who have attested the truth of their holy Faith by their own blood. He that can have the valour to suffer for his Religion, is in the sure way to Fame and Renown amongst his Party.

Now, Sir, these persons appear evidently on the suffering side, and providence hath cast them upon acting the sadder Scene; the Laws are something smart against them, and they may thank themselves for it. I wish they would thank the goodness of a merciful Prince, who hath been pleased to suspend the Execution of these Laws against them, and keep off the penalties which they threaten to them. However this act of Grace hath now rob'd them of this Plea; they cannot now sure call them-

F 4

selves

selves the persecuted Saints. But I must tell you, Sir, you are deceived, if you think so. Alas they are sufferers and the persecuted party still. Are they not branded with the odious name of Phanaticks? of Schismaticks? and is it not as good almost to take away their lives, as their reputation? have they not, many of them, parted with good Livings to preserve their Consciences pure and untainted? Yes, and more of them than would (we know) had they not been trapan'd by the rich Cabal at *London*, that could live without these Livings; and call you not this a suffering now? yes and a great one too, here's silence in Heaven upon it, or at least they hoped there would have been. Alas! the Ark is gone, and do
not

not they suffer in its Captivity? This is a sore Persecution, such as the Revelation tells you was to befall the Witnesses, and all that adored and followed not the Beast.

But, Sir, if we grant them to be sufferers in earnest, yet surely we must count them but in jest, when they pretend it to be for Righteousness sake. And yet so (we know) they do, and by all means endeavour to nourish this Opinion in their Votaries. They very well know, they have not a more plausible way, by which to assure the people of their integrity and conscientiousness, than this is; for who can doubt him serious and in earnest for his Religion, that will suffer for it? What mad men were we (I have heard some say) to undergo

F 5

these

these things, but that our Consciences oblige us thereto? so that you must needs believe them good men upon this account; for they'll forego any thing of Worldly concern, rather than violate their Consciences, and who must not praise and honour such Devote's?

Alas! Sir, a considering person knows this to be a very fallible mark of Integrity; and it may safely be asserted, that it is possible, and common to some men to take a pride in suffering. We know that great instance of Stoicism, *Possidonius*, under the violent surprises of the Gout (and they say there are not many things more tormenting) could cry out, *quàm suave, quàm dulce hoc!* only out of pride that he might boast himself able to assert and maintain

tain his own Principles : and surely 'tis as possible now for some men equally possessed with the same vice, to improve that vice to the same end, especially when the sufferings are much easier tolerable, and the gratifications of the vice much more considerable. For none of the afflictions pretended to by these men, can be near so tormenting as his ; the Persons are untouched, and there's no fire nor fagot to torment : and while the Stoick had but the content only to praise and extol himself, these have had multitudes to applaud and glorifie them for their great constancy ; yea and besides that, to make up, by their large charitable contributions, all their losses. So that even their losses turned to their advantage, and *Calamity*
found

found three days in *Newgate* (as the *Ano-Droll* told him in effect) more gainful, than half a years Preaching at *Aldermanbury*. So that now we have found out another Vice, that may possibly be in this matter; Pride and Covetousness too may have an influence upon some mens sufferings: and marvail not that I add this latter, for even Covetousness sometimes may be contributive to a seeming lavishness, and no man needs wonder to see a man expend a hundred, when the Interest is sure to be double to the Principal.

But, Sir, I needed not to have taken any pains to demonstrate the fallibillity of this Plea; no matter to the multitude, whether it be for Conscience or not, all the while 'tis suffering, they examine not the justice or injustice;

injustice ; they only slave at the sufferers (though perhaps some might suffer as murderers, or evil speakers, &c.) and as long as this is for the beloved Cause, they shall be no less than holy Martyrs ; say you what you can even the late bloody Regicides have been extolled by some, as Champions of the Cause, and *Ravilliack's* name shall be rubrick in the Jesuits Calendar.

5. Another thing that we guess to have a causality here, is their continual applauding, and commending of their people, and crying them up still for Saints. Sir, men naturally love to be commended, and have good things spoken of them. And of all the noxious things that vain men are fond of, Flattery is one of the most acceptable.

acceptable. And truly it requires a greater stock and measure of sobriety and prudence, than the multitude can be thought to be possessed of, to suppress all tumours of Pride, that are so mighty prone to arise upon a man hearing his own praise, and not to be mightily pleased, and tickled with the words of a Parasite. I remember *Epicetus* long since, hath laid it down as a mark of a great proficient in vertue: καὶ τὴν ἐπαίνον ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ ἀγαλὰ τῷ, ἐπαυνοῖτο παρ' ἑαυτοῦ, ὡς πλανηθέντι. Let a man praise and commend his vertue, he rather pitieth his ignorance, than proudly subscribes to his Opinion; and rather takes advantage thence to heighten his humility, for causing such a man to mistake, than gratifie his Pride, as if he merited.

rited any such commendation. And truly, Sir, He really is a very good man, who can improve his being praised to the advantage of his humility, and exciting of his industry, and avoid its blowing him up into a proud conceit of over-prising his own Excellency.

Now, Sir, it seldom fares worse with flatterers than with their message; he is counted a good and acceptable man, who brings such good and pleasant tidings, and men do not more delight to hear the report, but they have always as much kindness for him that tells it. It hath long since filled the hearts of good men with sorrow, and their Writings are every where full of complaints, that dextrous Parasites are always the most acceptable persons

sons to Princes, and indeed to all men; and therefore 'twill be the lesser wonder, if they be so to the vulgar, who, as to the exercises of Reason or Wisdom, are but one degree only removed from Children, to whom nothing is so grateful as fine words and fair commendations.

And since we see great men so prone to be mightily pleased with the praises given them by those below them (whose praises are rarely or never judicious, but ruled mostly by Passion, or some fortuitous emergencies) it will be the less strange, to see these mightily tickled with the praises of their Superiours. And indeed experience lets us clearly see, nothing pleaseth the multitude like Flattery: a cunning man
by

by this shall persuade them to more, than by twenty good Arguments taken from Conscience or Duty. We have seen the successfulness of this artifice, in our late intestine Wars; how cunningly did those Incendiaries Complement, and seek by all means to please and flatter the people: *Vox Populi* was by them asserted to be *Vox Dei*, and the popular vogue was the determination and dictate of Heaven. By this means you will find those Primitive Rebels in the Camp of *Israel*, easily draw the people to side with them, all the Congregation was holy they were all Gods chosen people, and therefore what had *Moses* and *Aaron* to do, to exercise Dominion and jurisdiction over them? and all successful Rebels have ever gone the

the same way, and the Church-Mutineers have always found the method as successful as those in the state.

Now, Sir, it is notorious to all men, how mighty civil these persons are to their people, how careful to caress all their followers with the glorious names of Gods Saints; the Lords holy ones, the dear people of God, the little Flock, the Lambs of Christ Jesus, the Redeemed ones of *Sion*, the true Remnant of *Jacob*, and the precious elect Seed. The Notoriety of this, will save me the labour of referring you to any Books or Sermons in which you may find these endearing compellations. And therefore I further tell you, that the only sure way for any man to obtain these honourable Titles, is to join himself

himself to their Assemblies, for alas all out of these are Children of darkness, the wicked of the earth, the Sons of *Belial*, and the Seed of the Serpent. We know their Charity can afford us no better names: Just so did the Pharisees of old, mightily extol and honour their own Disciples, whilst all men else in gross were but *populus terre*, or the best man in particular but *iste publicanus*; but these men are Saints as soon as ever they are but of the godly Party. I could tell you a story of a grave Doctor, that for some months together, every *Sunday* constantly prayed for his sick Maid under no worser a title, than *thy dear servant E.* till at length the good Saint was deliver'd of a fine Boy, which some unlucky Women swore

swore was very like the Father.

Now, Sir, How mightily (do you think) must this Courtship endear them to their people? oh! these fine names made a great noise in their heads, they could not but dance to such melodious ayrs; and the men that would treat them so kindly, need never fear any Ostracism, but should be sure to charm their greatest affection: nay, all they have shall be readily at such mens service, how can they grudge such civil Gentlemen any thing? He that can creep into the good Ladies Chamber, and there affectionately pray for her, as Gods Elect Lady, his holy Servant, his dear Handmaid, and her religious and hopeful Issue those tender Plants of the holy Seed,
and

and polished Corners of the Temple, may rise up with confidence of her hearty thanks; nay, may find he hath melted her heart into some yellow pieces; as one of these once told a Confident of his, who yet had not the Grace to conceal it, but publish'd the saying to the uncircumcised.

This is a civility and honour to their people, that you'll scarce be able to parallel any where besides; it far exceeds that of the Papists to their most religious Votaries: those seldom Canonize any till after death, and they do wisely, because they can safelier fix on them Miracles, &c. which perhaps themselves would have blushed at the forgery of, had they been living. But these men Canonize all presently, they

they are all precious Saints, as soon as ever they become their Disciples; and tell me then, doth not one good turn deserve another? you might count them ruder than the Boors of *Scythia*, if they should not mightily honour such obliging and courteous Masters.

And now by this time, Sir, I suppose I may have hired you, as well as my self in this Inquisition, in which I do not intend to give you any further trouble, only let me for a conclusion add, that if these Causes be rightly ghesed at and assign'd, there will these two or three observables be easily colligible from them.

First, That the people have no such extraordinary great Reason to honour these men, as perhaps they may imagine, and that

that they act very little beyond the weakness, and indiscretion of Children in adoring of them. If their eyes ever chance to be truly opened, to see what true Religion means, and what the real Terms and Conditions of Salvation are; they will find (I doubt not) that their Leaders have abused them, and their Teachers caused them to err. And then (perhaps) acknowledge they had no more true reason to honour these men, than Children have to do the like to those Spirits (as we call them) who entertain their eyes and phancies with some pleasant toys, 'till they have stolen them from their Parents, and betrayed them into slavery. Indeed if men love to be cheated, and can take a delight in being shamefully abused ;

sed; then I confess they may have cause enough to honour these Persons, for they can fit that humour well; but otherwise, if they be wise, and detest imposture, they'l have little more cause to honour these as benefactors, and dispensors of true Heavenly food, than they would have to do so to those, who, when they called for Bread should give them Stones, or when they expected Fish, should treat them with Scorpions.

Secondly, That these men themselves have no very great cause to glory in the acquist; the applause of the multitude is in it self very inconsiderable, and no wise man ever made much account of it: but it is much less valuable, when tis fraudulently obtain'd; the guilt
in

in the acquisition, will quite damp and spoil the pleasure of the fruition. And certainly the joy in seeing the people very much pleas'd, will very poorly compensate the horror, that must needs arise upon the thought, that God is most grievously provoked and offended. There's a Scripture, Sir, that we have heard frequently in the mouths of these persons to patronize and defend some of their actions, I only wish 'twere as much in their hearts to allay their Pride in being thus honoured. *Whether it be just in the sight of God to obey men rather than God judge ye*; certainly Reason would that men should ambition rather the honour that cometh from God, though the multitude were displeased; than to gratifie the

G

vain

vain humour, and thereby acquire the as vain applause thereof, by offending of God. We find the Apostle of the Gentiles telling his Galatians, that *if he sought to please men, he should not be the servant of Christ.* I doubt some men might read their fate out of these words, and most certainly all may do so, who purchase mans applause by ways that Christ hath not warranted. Even in the midst of such laughter the heart may be justly sad, when it reflects upon the reproach, and ignominy, the confusion and shame, that will strike the Epilogue to all these Comick sports, and turn the peoples present admiring acclamations, into the most virulent curses and execrations for ever.

Were it not much better to
be

be serious in preventing this direful *Exit*, now in time? by every man laying aside these poor low mean designs, and quitting that peevishness, and that Pride that necessarily engage men upon them? Were it not much safer to cease quarrelling and disputing against things (acknowledged by themselves) indifferent? the making vents, and Schisms, and parties in the Church, which must be acknowledg'd extreamly dangerous? and resolve to join cordially with their brethren, in doing God and the Church service, and bringing mens Souls into a love and pursuit of true Godliness, all which are also acknowledg'd absolutely needful? this (I should think) were a laudable method to Glory, a way to assure the

honour that cometh from God, and only deserves that name: if they can out-strip their brethren in this procedure, let them (say I) have a *Benjamins* Mefs and welcom. No good man (I am sure) would grudge them this honour, but rejoyce to see them all have the reward due to true Prophets. Nay I dare be publick security, that hereby they should find ten times the comfort, that they can possibly in the present contrary method. One Soul thus saved, shall gain them more true joy, than a thousand gain'd to their own party; one man brought by them thus acceptably to honour and praise God, shall turn more to their advantage, than to hear a multitude canting their glory.

3. Neither thirdly, need any
of

of the other Clergy envy them this painted glory, nor have much reason to grudge them this imaginary felicity. 'Tis what a wise man would not grudge his worst Enemy living. It was a sad word which our Saviour spake of the proud ambitious Pharisees, *Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.* And 'tis all that men of the like spirit must hope for. And indeed 'tis yet so very little that even Envy it self cannot fasten one tooth on. Let them please themselves therefore in the purchase, be thou quiet and Patient, they will one day wish they had never known it: let the multitude of their followers sing their *Hosanna*, be still, a day will come when their note will sadly change: let them triumph over thee as one much

inferi-

inferiour to them, do thou thy duty sincerely, they may chance one day to wish they were equal with thee.

But of all things, I hope none of these will make so very ill use of this Enquiry, as to endeavour gaining glory by the same methods, or pursue honour by making the same experiments. God forbid, this were the greatest injury possible to the design of these Papers, and themselves too: if they should be inferiour to these in honour from their party (as it often falls out) yet they may have the peace and joy, of faithfully discharging their great trust, and enjoy the honour that cometh from God, which he will most certainly confer upon every true Servant of his; which the other may in vain wish for, when

when shame and despair shall
period all their glory.

But Sir, my Zeal here tempts
me to be impertinent, as I should
certainly be, should I presume
to teach such grave persons. If
there be any need of an address
to them, or those of them now
with you, the following dis-
course may well be looked
upon under that Notion, which
(according to your command)
I have (with some importu-
nity) obtain'd of our friend,
and now send you. I think it
may pertinently serve as a sea-
sonable advice to all Clergy-
men, how they may secure that
glory that fadeth not; to your
desire of perusing which I now
remit you, after this one Re-
quest, that you'll forgive this
trouble I have now given you,
and believe it to result only

from that delight and pleasure
that I take in any thing that
may comply with your com-
mands, and let you see how
much I ambition the honour of
approving my self,

Dear Sir,

Your most humble

Servant, &c.

A

DISCOURSE

Upon 1 Tim. 4. 7. to some
of the Clergy at a pub-
lick Meeting.

1 Tim. 4. 7.

*And exercise thy self rather unto
godliness.*

IF there were nothing else to
secure me, from being coun-
ted impertinent, in addressing
to you at present from these
words; this were abundantly
sufficient, that the great Apostle
thinks it proper to be one of
G 5 the

154 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

the principal Directions to his beloved *Timothy*, among those many that he giveth him in this Epistle, by which he fully instructs him how to deport himself, both in his private Capacity as a Christian, and also in his more publick, both as a Priest and Bishop of the Church of *Ephesus*. And as it relates to him in this latter Capacity, I have determin'd to consider it at this time. But before I enter immediately upon it, there's one word which will require me to stay a little upon it, in order to the acquainting you with the full design and import of this Apostolical Precept, and that is the [*rather*] here in our own translation. It is apparent to any one, it is not expressly in the Greek *γυναικεδὲ συνελθὲν ἐν αὐτοῖς*, so the words there

there are ; Yet this we may say in justification of the Version, that it is properly enough inferred from it. And the *N* will well enough bear the force of it ; for when it cometh to be a Comparative Exceptive, as here it is, there is very little difference whether we express our selves, not this but that, or *rather this than that*.

In the proceeding part of the Verse the Apostle is cautioning *Timothy* against the *Βεβήλους καὶ γραϊδούς μύθους*, those vain, idle, trifling, foolish fables, either of the Jews or Gnosticks ; but as 'tis most commonly believed, of the later, those great boasters of the *Ἰουδαίου καὶ γνώσεως*, as he calls it, *Cap. 6. 10.* Science or Knowledge falsely so call'd. Men mightily Opinion'd and conceited of their own great Knowledge,

156 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

ledge, by reason of their dexterity and readines in mixing a great many of the Heathen stories, with the Christian Religion, accommodating the Fables of the one to the Doctrines of the other; and afterwards superinducing a necessity of believing those Schemes or Systems that they extracted out of this strange Miscellany. Of which wild conceits especially about God the *Ido*, the Angels the *aiōnes*, the Creation, &c. Whoever desires an information, may have it in *Irenæus* his account of the Phancies of *Valentinus* and his Followers, or *Epiphanius*, or *S. Augustine*. But in none (I think) more pleasantly and fully than in that excellent piece of Antiquity *de Gemmis Basilidianis*, retrieved by the great care and industry of *Cbissetius*. And

And I wish this Charge were only to be brought against Jews or Gnosticks, but there are those will tell you, that others also may as justly be mentioned, as guilty of these adulterous mixtures, who have depraved the Purity of the Christian Religion with the baser allays of Heathenish placits.

I. And first, I may tell you, you will find this by many smartly charged upon *Origen*, and some others that issued out of the *Alexandrian* School, that great refiner and follower of the *Platonick* Philosophy :: whose study hath employed it self so to accommodate the Doctrine of Christ to the Rules and Sentiments of that excellent *Athenian*, that what was said of *Philo* the Jew and *Plato*, may be said of the agreement made by

by these men between Christ and Plato, then πλατων χρισονίζει, ἢ χρισὸς πλατωνίζει; and yet there are some that will undertake so to vindicate Origen from any Crime in this, as to cause it redound unto his greater praise.

2. And truly to give every one their due, I am apt to believe that the like charge may as justly lye against another sort of men, I mean those voluminous triflers the Schoolmen, whose industry hath fully as much adulterated Christian Religion, by tying it up to the Rules and Philosophy of the Idolized Stagyrice. This then may be the *Periphrasis* of the [rather] there are a great many of things in the Jewish *Cabbala*, and no less amongst the Gnosticks and others, that carry the shew of pleasant things, and are
hugely

hugely tempting to liquorish Philosophical heads; but behold I shew unto thee a more excellent way, let me direct thee to a more noble and profitable study. *Exercise thy self unto godliness.*

Exercise. There's the act enjoined (if you require a division) *thy self*, there's the subject.

To godliness there's the object. Though I will freely confess to you, I am no admirer of some mens dexterity in splitting hairs, but count all forced divisions needless, and often hurtful, as entangling the sence of plain Precepts. And where there is not a necessity of them, in order either to Explication, or methodical Proceeding, I cannot but account them very impertinent.

Exercise,

160 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

Exercise, γυμνασιον a word evidently metaphorical: there are two references of it found enough; for it either relates to the stripping, or to the fervency of those ancient Racers and Wrestlers, or other Combatants for Victory.

In the first sence it calls for *Timothy's* divesting and stripping himself of all incumbrances or lets in his Study or Practice of Holiness, and particularly those vain trifling Fables before-mentioned. And in this sence it may receive a considerable light from a parallel place, *Heb. 12. 1.* ὅγινον ἀποθεμενοι πάλιν, laying aside every weight that might impede and hinder us in our agonistick course of Piety and Godliness.

But the second Reference is the more common, in which it calls

calls for the most vigorous pursuit, the most athletick endeavours after Godliness: be as sedulous and diligent after this, as those great Masters of the *Gymnasia*, required their Scholars to be after learning. -- And certainly the advice in this sence is very rational; for if that of *Solomon's* be so in the things of earth, *whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, (hoc age)* as the Heathens worded it, certainly 'tis much more rational in the things of Heaven. And doubtless Piety deserves our most intense and vigorous endeavours above any thing else, and the Apostle gives a sufficient Reason for this in the next Verse, because it is *πρὸς πᾶσι θελίμῳ*, whereas the advantage of other things is but small, and that small portion but
in

in a few instances neither; this is greatly profitable, and to all purposes too. And doubtless all wise men will proportion the measures of their cares after things, according to the degrees of excellency that is in them, and advantage by them.

And truly, Brethren, were I minded to stay here, this would cast a very severe eye upon many in these days. Not only upon the modish prophane Atheists, the men that abhor the very shew of Piety, have not so much as the Hypocrisie of it.

But also upon the *Laodicean* indifference, and tepidness of most after it; to whom S. *Ambrose's* Rule, *Immensitas est mensura*, sounds like Heresie: and truly Godliness hath the meanest the minutest of the care of almost all men. View but mens
carri-

carriage upon the *Sunday*, when the great business of Piety particularly summons their regards, and you'll see those men taking their hours of sleep then, who will scarce allow their eyes a minute of it all the week after. Come into the Church, and you'll find that Vestal fire of Zeal, which should always burn there, not so much as once kindled. Not so much as the faintest Emblems of it in many, and in the best, represented but by dull unactive Tapers. And I heartily could wish, there lay not a charge too justly against *Timothy* also here, whose zeal and fervency in Religious Service should be that great flame, at which the lesser Tapers of the people should take fire. I will not anticipate what would come in more properly hereafter.

164 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

hereafter. That I would willingly touch at, is indeed a great defect in the *γύμναζε οὐς ἐν ὁσίῳ*, our Zeal in Gods Worship, and religious Service (Not to detain you) 'tis plainly this, That careless posting over the Service and Prayers of the Church. And give me leave freely to tell you my thoughts, the Liturgy of the Church of *England* (that hath so often triumphed over the oppositions of all her gainfayers) hath not worse Enemies in the World, than these that carry the semblance of Friends; there cannot a more effectual course be taken to render it common and contemptible in the esteem of men, than what these men pursue. It will never be more wounded (I mean as to losing its due veneration) by the assaults of its
open

open Enemies, than it is in the House and by the carriage of these its professed Friends. -- But I pass on.

Exercise thy self. And truly when we have said all, this is the right method, if our Saviour himself may be thought able to prescribe it, *πρῶτον ἑκβαλε*, first cast the moat out of thine own eye, and then endeavour as much as thou wilt to help thy Brothers. *When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren:* be sure begin at home first. First love thy self, then extend thy charity to thy Neighbour: Do what good thou canst to others in Gods name, but remember that unless thou dost good to thy self also, neither God nor man will count thee wise; and sure no man can expect to be counted other than silly in the extremity,

extremity, who lays out his care (with the imprudent spouse) to keep other mens Vineyards, while his own is neglected, and exposed to Ruine.

The last thing is *πρὸς εὐσεβίαν* unto Godliness, of which though (we know) all men can talk fast enough, and all sorts usurp it as the proper signature of their own party; yet too plain experience let us see how miserably men mistake in the notions they have of it, and how sad and fatal the consequences of those mistakes are.

Some take it only to denote a little care about Gods immediate Service and Worship; and the consequence of this error is, to see men Saints on the *Sunday*, and Devils all the week after.

Others take it to import only

ly a zealous observance of the Precepts of the first Table; and from hence it comes to pass that Piety is cryed up by those men who are wholly regardless of Honesty, and men fall into the old jewish damning Opinion, that although they murder, steal, commit adultery, and swear falsely, yet the coming into Gods House, observing his Sabbaths, and carefully worshipping of him, will easily atone and expiate the guilt of those Immoralities.

Another sort of men take it only for a Scheme of Faith, and judge of their own and other mens Godliness, by the mode and fashion of their Religion. One man thinks he is presently holy, if he be of this way, and another thinks he is so, if he be of the contrary; and

and the consequence of this is, to see men wear their Professions, as the Pharisees did their Phylacteries, and the Gnosticks their Gems, as Amulets and Charms to secure them against the obligation of any Commands. From whence it comes to pass, that Saintship and the most prodigious acts of wickedness are easily reconcileable and consistent.

And truly those that go beyond these, and grant godliness to include obedience to Gods Commands, yet are apt to halt and lisp here, and fall into another old Jewish error, that if a man do any one thing well, it is enough; in compliance with which, men chuse out a few of the easiest things to perform, such as least thwart their humour, or cross their interests, and

and the performance of these (they doubt not) will hallow all their other neglects. And from hence proceeds the straining at Gnats, and swallowing Camels, the Tithing-Mint and Cummin-Seed, but neglecting the great important things of the Law, because more unpleasant and difficult.

It will highly concern us therefore, to settle such a Notion of Godliness, as may secure men against all these fatal mistakes; and that we may do by expounding it so as to take in the whole matter of Christian Obedience, the whole Syntaxe of Duties, the combination of all those Vertues, which our great Master hath enjoined all his Votaries; and which the sacred Idiom expresseth sometimes by Holiness, sometimes by righteousness, & sometimes by both.

H

And

And I understand nothing to hinder, why we may not so understand and expound it here. For though I know *iustitia* is many times taken to import the true and right manner of Gods Worship according to his Word, in opposition to all Idolatrous Superstitions, and false Worships among the Heathens; yet I know as well, that 'tis oftentimes understood in a fuller latitude, as comprehending the whole duty of a Christian man. And therefore the Syriack Interpreter translates it here *iustitiam*, and St. Chrysostome expounds it to denote *vitam rectam*, as well as *fidem puram*. Therefore may it well be called Godlikeness, endeavouring to be pure as God is pure, to transcribe the divine perfections, and Vertues, Truth, Justice,

stice, Mercy, and Charity, according to the utmost of humane possibilities. Upon which account I suppose it is, that holy men are said to be *ὅσις ὁσίως νομίζοντες*, 2 Pet. 1. 4.

And yet if we understood it here in the first and stricter sence, without much straining, it would draw in also this later, for certainly that man worships God best who obeys him most, and in vain do we the first if we neglect the latter. It is the Sacrifice of the just that pleaseth God, whilst that of the wicked is abomination. Even Nature hath taught the Heathen that the Sacrifice of the guilty person is but *συνεὶς πυρὸς*, fuel only to the flame, but not at all acceptable to the Gods; and it is known to have been a common speech among the Pytha-

H 2 goreans,

172 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

goreans, *τιμώμε τὸν θεὸν ἀγαθὰ, ἐν τῷ θεῷ διαδοίαν ὁμολώμεν.* Our persons by godliness hallow our gifts, and not our gifts our persons.

And now I will suppose you have the full import of this Apostolical direction, which though given to *Timothy*, may yet by a just and warrantable Analogy, be extended to all Clergy-men after him, enjoining them the exercising themselves to Godliness.

There are two Instances in which the exercise of this is required of us; and when I have acquainted you with the reasonableness of its being required in both those, I have finished the trouble I intend your patience at present.

The two Instances I mean are these. Our publick Preaching to others, and our own life
and

and conversation with others: endeavour by thy Doctrine to plant and promote it in others, and be sure to practise and exercise it thy self.

1. We should earnestly endeavour to plant Godliness in others by our Doctrines, making this the great end of all our Preaching, designing all such our publick discourses towards the implanting of true holiness in our hearers.

1. For first of all; this is certainly to do them the most real good. That the great interest of Souls doth depend on holiness, and that the happiness of them is not attainable without it, is a Truth so clearly asserted, and so frequently attested in the sacred Canon of our Faith, that I dare take the confidence to tell any that doubts

174 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

of it, either that he's wholly a stranger thereto, hath very little conversed therewith; or else hath taken a great deal of pains to misunderstand it. And doubtless it requires some considerable industry, for a man so far to debauch his Conscience, as to be able to withstand clear Convictions, and to suspend its assent to such clear and evident assertions of the Almighty. And truly though a man came to consult the divine Revelations, with some considerable prejudices, and prepossessions contrary to this truth; yet a sober person would think, he would meet with so many, and those so plain and express assertions of it, as were abundantly able to chase away all those prejudices, and irresistably impress a sense of it upon his Soul. And
certainly,

certainly he that but reads over *Heb. 12. 14. James 2.* latter part of that Chapter, 1 Epistle of *St. John*, part of 1 and 2. Chapters, or several sayings of our great Master Christ Jesus. as *Mat. 5. 17. and 20.* and many others, the time would fail me to recount all, in which this truth is so plainly and beyond all possibility of any rational doubting asserted. I say he that reads over all these, must needs labour under some strange fascination, if yet he be able to doubt of, or question it.

Nor is this only the way to secure them an eternal and future, but also to enstate them in the greatest present bliss. Give me a man that dare set up any one thing whatever to vye with the present felicity of being

176 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

holy ; I will dare to tell him, that it is so far from yielding a man any true happiness, that it is not able so much as to secure him from being miserable ; it cannot yield him so much as the privative and meauer part of blifs. And indeed we need not consult the *Ephod* for this truth; even the Heathens themselves (as bad Masters as they are) yet will clearly teach us this Notion. I will not suppose any of you so unacquainted with them, as to waste time in summoning their sayings to attest this, only let me hint this to you, that these sayings, are not only some *Rhodomontades* of the *Stoicks*, but even of the soberest among them. Therefore did the *Pythagoreans* represent vicious men, as placed upon a restless rowler,

—ὁ δὲ κυλινδρὸς
ἄλλοι ἐπ' ἄλλα φέρονται ἀποίονα πῆ-
ματ' ἔχοντες

are the very expressions in the golden Sayings.

And indeed it were a very easie task rationally to demonstrate this, in any of the gay Phantasms, and admired Felicities of the World, that take them separate from Godliness, and they have not that lesser part of felicity in them, *viz.* the making their possessors not miserable : while on the contrary Godliness hath the honour to be *πρὸς πάντα ὀρέλιμθ*. And besides the certainty of its future glory, is retained at present with that joy and peace, and serenity of Soul, that he only knows that is the happy possessor of.

And certainly then it will

H 5

by

178 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

by a very easie consequence follow, that he least pursueth the intendment and design of his holy Calling, that endeavours to be serviceable to his people in their greatest interests, and levels all his aim at this great mark, the bringing them to understand and comply with the great end of their Religion, and the transcribing and imitating the divine perfections of that God, whom it obligeth them to adore. And while others have other Rules to judge the excellency of Preachers by, their measures certainly are very false and precarious. *Socrates* (we know) was deservedly judged the wisest of the Athenian Philosophers, for this very reason, because whilst others imployed themselves only in aery Speculations; he only

ly bended his study to the bettering mens lives, and healing the Immoralities of humane Nature. And doubtless that Preacher deserves the greatest praise, who most closely pursueth that great design, while a great many others (its easie to signalize too many) must sit down in much lower rooms.

And truly what that good man said of the great disputers, may too truly be spoken of some great Preachers amongst us. "It is just cause of sorrow
"to see men so serious and yet
"so trifling, a very wounding
"spectacle to see these great
"Heroes (like Hercules at the
"distaff) so degenerously employed, and to find those that
"were designed by Christ for
"Fishers of men, entertain
"themselves and others too
"only

“only with picking up shells
 “and pebbles on the shore. Nor
 “is it much wonder if these
 “men take up the Disciples
 “complaint, we have laboured
 “all night, and taken nothing.
 The great *Eulogium* is to the
 faithful Servant, and shall in
 vain be expected by him, that’s
 treacherous to his trust; and
 the shining as Stars in the Orbs
 of Celestial Glory, will only be
 the happy lot of those, who
 do (or at least cordially indea-
 vour to) bring Souls to righ-
 teousness.

2. This is one of the most
 probable expedients, to re-
 trieve the true and ancient
 Christian Religion. He that
 but soberly considers what
 Christianity was in its Primi-
 tive State, will (like that good
 man of old reading over our
 Saviours

Saviours great Sermon (*Aut hoc non est Evangelium, aut nos non sumus Christiani*) be forced upon this conclusion, either that was not true Christianity, or this which now bears that name, is not: and because he is assured that the first was true, therefore infers that is spurious and counterfeit.

Time was [B] when *ἡσυχία* and *αἰσβη*, were the characteristick notes of the true and degenerate Members of the Church; that of the first and this of the latter, and holiness of life was the true signature of a Christian. *Non magna loquimur sed vivimus*, was then the Christian Motto. And that pristine honour that She was so happy in, even to the envy and silence of all opposition, was acquired by the Piety and Holiness

liness of her Votaries. A Christian was but another name for a vertuous good man, and the lives of Christians verified these to be *synonoma's*.

But alas! whose views the Religion now on foot, will easily discover its great degeneracy. That lay in the Heart, from whence it imparted life and vigour into all the active members; while this resides only in the Brain, and seldom descends lower than the Tongue: from whence proceeds a kind of a spiritual rickats, the head swells, and grows large and tuberous, while the active members are void of strength, and dwindle away into an unactive leanness. There is none that makes it his business to *do good* now; yea we may with the Psalmist repeat

at a publick Meeting. 183

peat it, and say *scarce one*. An empty formal Notional Religion is that, men content themselves withal. And while a few Ceremonies and Appanages of Religion, are so eagerly controverted, you see very few contests about the life of it; we can see men with great Zeal and little Charity manage controversies about the little things, but can discover no lists for the agonistick Contests in Godliness, or if there be any, can discover no Contenders in them.

It is too obvious to need much insisting upon, that men consult their Passions and Interests and Inclinations in choosing their Religion; and let these alone to provide for themselves; be sure, while these are the Electors, the choice will not be

184 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

be very uneasy. Never fear, there will be nothing of difficulty, nothing of painfulness, no austerity in these mens Religion. The mortification of a beloved lust, the amputation of a dear Member, the restraining of a sensual Propensity, are lessons which their Religion will never go about to teach. St. Peter shall be their Apostle, but 'tis in the worst advice that ever he gave, *Master spare thy self*, consult thine own ease, God is a better Master than so. Hee's the Prophet for these people, that *speaks smooth things* unto them. And I need not tell you how many secure the peoples favour, by indulging and complying with this humour. Tell them fine stories of Christ, of the Freeness of Grace, &c. and so become adored by their Proselytes

felytes as so many Apostles, while the degeneracy of Christianity is these mens great Guilt, and in a great measure owes it self to their Doctrines.

3. There are very few means more likely to stifle and quench those various Sects and differences that there are amongst us.

And that not only upon this account, because Godliness is so contrary to, and destructive of all those humours that occasion and feed these distempers. Though it hath been seen that this hath been pleaded to justifie most Schisms, and Holiness hath been the Banner under which each Faction hath pretended to march; which lets us see what gross fallacies men put upon themselves, so as to be able to imagine, that Piety can be the true Ensign of a Schismatical

matical Faction, and the holy Bible and Sword in the same field true Heraldry (the Solecism, not long ago, of the Scottish Reformers). And yet every man that can but consider, can tell you that nothing can be more contrary to Godliness, than giddy Factionousness.

And that upon other scores besides what I have hinted. It's true, if men study to bring the people to Godliness, they endeavour to bring them to that which is contrary to Pride, Covetousness, and Convictedness, which are the three great Parents and Origines of Schism and Heresie; and so go a direct way to destroy these. But besides these, the conduciveness of Godliness to the destruction of these is apparent upon other accounts also.

I. For

1. For first, it is most certain, that mens intermitting of sober and regular Actions (such as Godliness engageth unto) is the-readiest way possible to fall into wild, extravagant, and exorbitant ones. And that Idleness is one great Cause of Factiousness, hath been so fully and clearly demonstrated by one (whose goodness or humility I know not which most to admire) that I should but go about to correct *Apelles*, should I add any thing to fortifie the Demonstration : It is while men sleep that the envious man sows these tares, and (as a learned Prelate of our own hath long since observed) The laborious Bees pass safely by those tempting Bottles, into which the idle Wasps are easily seduced. Let men but resolve

solve upon Holiness, I'll secure them, they shall find enough to employ themselves about, be they as active as they will, or can be; they shall have no time for Idleness, and consequently no leisure to admit those pests that follow it.

2. Besides secondly let us do this, and by Gods blessing upon our endeavours, we may rob these dissenters of their most popular and plausible Argument against us. You cannot but know the stir that hath been made, about communicating with wicked men, and the danger of joining with mix'd Assemblies. Men have hunted for Purity 'till they have lost all Piety, and the sight of profaneness in some professed Members of the Church, hath made the readier way for the admission

admission of that Apostolical Precept (though in a mistaken sense) *Come out from among them my people, and be seperate from them.*

But now this course is the ready way to beat the Enemy out of this Hold: For while by Holiness appearing in us, all men should be forced to confess that God is indeed among us, we should let those all see the vanity and wickedness of those, that cry out of a necessity of seperating from us.

4. Let me add one inducement more; this will be the most effectual course we can take, to perpetuate our Religion, and procure the divine protection of that Church, whose hedges seem now broken down, and her self exposed too like an Orphan.

It

It is a Maxim of Solomon, That *length of days is in the right hand of holiness, and in her left hand riches and honour,* and 'tis as applicable to Societies as to single men: As the Pillars of a Nation so of a Church too are supported by Righteousness, and without that commonly in a little time crumble to nothing. The Jews tell us, that in the second Temple, which lasted 420. Years, there were near 300 High Priests, while in the former, that lasted within 10. Years as long, there was a Succession but of eighteen; and the difference they assign to arise from the Piety of these, and Impiety of those. You have an excellent Discourse to this purpose in the late famous Bishop of *Down*.

I cast in this enforcement
now

now [B] a little the rather because of the time; there seems to be silence and amazement in this our Heaven now, I pray God it may be but for half an hour. Who knows but we may be within the prospect of that time, in which that Church which hath been blessed with so many miraculous resurrections, may draw near a final expiration? God Almighty avert the Fate, and change the Prognoſticks; but certainly there never was more cause, to take up the Psalmists Prayer (and there is no means likely to cause its speed, but Holiness) *Arise O Lord maintain thine own cause, remember how the foolish man blasphemeth thee daily.*

Give me leave to conclude my *Ecclesiastes* much what as *Solomon* doth his. *Fear God and keep*

keep his Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man, and the endeavouring to bring men to do this, is the whole duty of the spiritual Man. And when that great day of Revelation shall commence, in which every secret thing shall be brought into judgment, he that hath most studiously pursued this design, will certainly be acknowledged by our great Master for the most faithful Servant.

In this first sence therefore, Exercise thy self unto godliness.

2. But that's not enough ; therefore secondly be sure also to exercise *thy self* unto Godliness ; shew it forth in thine own life and actions ; think not thy duty done, when thou hast commended it unto, and pressed it upon others, but be sure endeavour it to thine own Soul :
let

let it be seen in thy living, as well as heard in thy Preaching.

This is the second Reference (you may remember) I made of this Precept to *Timothy*; and give me leave to urge a Consideration or two to enforce it.

I. And first, Let us (I beseech you) consider that we have Souls as well as other men, whose Salvation ought to be as dear, and whose damnation certainly will be as terrible unto us, as other mens can be to them, or us either. And certainly it is a very wild Charity, that prompts us to endeavour other mens Salvation, and wholly neglect in the mean time our own. Certainly [B] it would be but a poor relief to a man in Hell, to think that he hath been instrumental in saving

ving others, but rather be the greater aggravation of, and cause him more virulently to curse his own Folly, in neglecting his own welfare. What's that Sheep profited by Cloathing others, while it self goeth naked? or what comfort finds that filly Worm in its death, who hath extracted its bowels to make others fine and gay? Who but a madman would seek to build a fortune unto others upon the ruins of his own House? and I am sure he is far enough from the temper of an Apostle, who when he hath preached unto others, will not take care that himself may not *become a castaway.*

Either therefore say thou hast no Soul, or the Salvation of it is nothing unto thee, or else that it is attainable upon
other

other Terms and Conditions than that of other men, or else *exercise thy self unto godlines*; and do this, because thou canst not say the first, and art unnatural if thou say the second, and hast no reason to think the third.

2. For secondly, Know that thou art obliged to Holiness as well as other men, nay by stricter Rules too than they are. Thy Salvation is not only not attainable without Holiness, any more than another mans is, but requires a greater measure of it, in order thereto; and thy negligence may cast a greater grief upon thee, than another mans upon him.

I will not urge this from the greater measure of knowledge, that thou art supposed to have above them; though that alone

196 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

will fix the guilt faster, and make the stain deeper, than it will on another, the *Διαφύλαξις* *πολλῶν*, Christ himself hath assured us will be such a mans sad portion.

But I would rather argue this from the Consideration of that sacred Function, we are honoured withal. Our very Orders (you know) are called holy; the very Bells of *Aaron* alone will ring him this note. I have chosen you out of the World (saith Christ to his Disciples) and surely then such are to be seperate in their Lives as well as Office, and a horrid guilt it will be for these, to be conformed to it. Certainly, those that are Stars in Christs right hand, must either shine bright, or else they will sully their Master's Glory, and be cast thence
with

with indignation and scorn. While other men that are wicked, do yet retain the name of men (though Fools or Madmen) it is worth our observing, that sin in these is a perfect Exanthropie, and causeth them presently to commence Devils. You may see this in two Speeches of our Saviour himself, *have not I chosen you twelve, yet one is a Devil?* meaning Judas. Nay when St. Peter himself becomes scandalous, and tempts to evil, he is rebuked in no milder terms than, *Get thee behind me Satan.* The Corruption of the best is always the worst, saith our old Maxim, and 'tis as true in Morality as Nature. It was therefore excellent Advice, which the lately mentioned Bishop gave his Clergy. "That
"every Minister should judge

198 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

“of his own duty, by stricter
“Measures, and severer Rules,
“than he doth that of his Peo-
“ple. And truly it were a very
easie task to instance in many
things, that in the Laity are
tollerable, which would carry
a very dangerous appearance in
the Clergy, and be too liable to
misconstruction.

3. This will be the likeliest
way to render thy Preaching
Holiness unto others, effectual
unto its blessed end, and thy
failing here, will be sure to fru-
strate thy endeavours there. It
is even a common-place Truth,
That man is Mimical, and re-
gards Examples a great deal
more than Precepts; there are
enow have told you, that a
Preachers good Example is his
best Homily, and his good Life
his most prevailing Sermon.

And

And if that Maxim of *Chrysostom* be true, that good Works convince more than Miracles, than certainly that Preacher that desires any fruit of his labours, must acknowledge himself under the strongest obligations imaginable, to be critically careful how he liveth. As Religion hath no more powerful argument for it self than the piety of its Votaries, (for that Fountain must needs be clear, whose streams are so) so truly no mans exhortations work so powerfully upon us, as his, who is himself (we see) affected with them. *Quæ agenda docebat ipse prius agendo premonstrabat*, was the commendation of one of our English Saints, and ought to be ambition'd by every Preacher. Alas! as the command of that Captain wakes
I 4 coldly,

coldly, who only cryeth go; in comparison of his, that saith Come (*ignave venire te Caesar non ire jubet*;) so men little attend to those Preachers, that bid them go in the paths of Holiness, in comparison of them, who go before them themselves. It's the language of an Egyptian Pharaoh, *Go ye and serve the Lord*, the language of Canaan, is *O come and let us*, and which of these is more likely to prevail on man, less than a Prophet may easily foretel, and that upon very rational grounds also.

For why should any man think that his exhortation should prevail more with me, than himself? or hope to persuade me to practise that of which I see him wholly regardless? What more compendious course

course can he take, to cause me to mistrust the truth of all his Arguments, and suspect them for Fallacies, be they never so specious, only because I see they have no Faith with him? Who regards a drunken mans Exhortation to Temperance? or believe that himself thinks that necessary, with which he makes bold so constantly to dispense? In vain shall you endeavour to perswade men, you are serious in pressing those Duties on them, which you make no Conscience of performing yourselves; nor will men ever think those Duties practicable, that are wholly disregarded by those that preach them. It was therefore an advice worthy of an Apostle, which is given to *Timothy* in this Epistle, *Take heed unto thy self, and to thy Doctrine*; and certainly the former is

202 *A Discourse to the Clergy*

is of as great necessity as the latter, nay necessary in order to it; that thy Doctrine may not miscarry, be sure take care of thy self: for thy loose neglect of thy self, will be sure to frustrate the design of thy Doctrine.

Upon these accounts therefore be sure to exercise *thy self* unto godliness.

What Censures then can be too severe for these men, when prophane and profligate? I hope there are not many, but those that are, are so many too many. *Ὅριον ἀποκόψου* is all the Petition I make for them. And I hope we are not yet in such sad circumstances, but that it may be granted, if the Church may not judge them without, yet she may be permitted (I hope) to govern and correct (when need is) her own Children.

Give

Give me leave once more to speak my thoughts before you; the Church of *Englands* Honour will never throughly be vindicated, nor her Clergy's Reputation cleared and asserted, 'till this course be effectually followed. And (I doubt not but) every good man is sensible of this, and will add his suffrage to the conjecture.

I conclude therefore by beseeching you [my B.] to suffer the word of Exhortation. Let us all combine together in this pious resolution, of *exercising* our selves *unto godliness*, and contending each man to exceed his Brother in it. Our Contentions here will (I am sure) be warrantable, and our neglect inexcusably culpable Providence hath cast us upon afflicting times, wherein many eagerly hunt and gape for our destruction,

on, and who knows but God intends it as an essay of our faithfulness? That vindicating our Religion, the asserting our own Innocence are only to be effected by this method. Our failure will put a Sword into our Enemies hands, and make us accessaries to our own ruin; while our care will shame the malice of our detractors, and put to silence all gainsayers.

I speak to wise and good men, that are able to judge what I say. And therefore I speak so little to these things, which indeed it is a task, not to enlarge upon.

But I conclude with the Psalmists Prayer; *Let all thy Priests, O Lord, be clothed with righteousness, and then shall all thy Saints shout for joyfulness, Amen.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

FINIS.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION
1895

April 9.
1873.
Robert L. Shreve.
Licensed.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION
1895



†

April 9. Licensed,
1673. *Roger L'estrange.*

